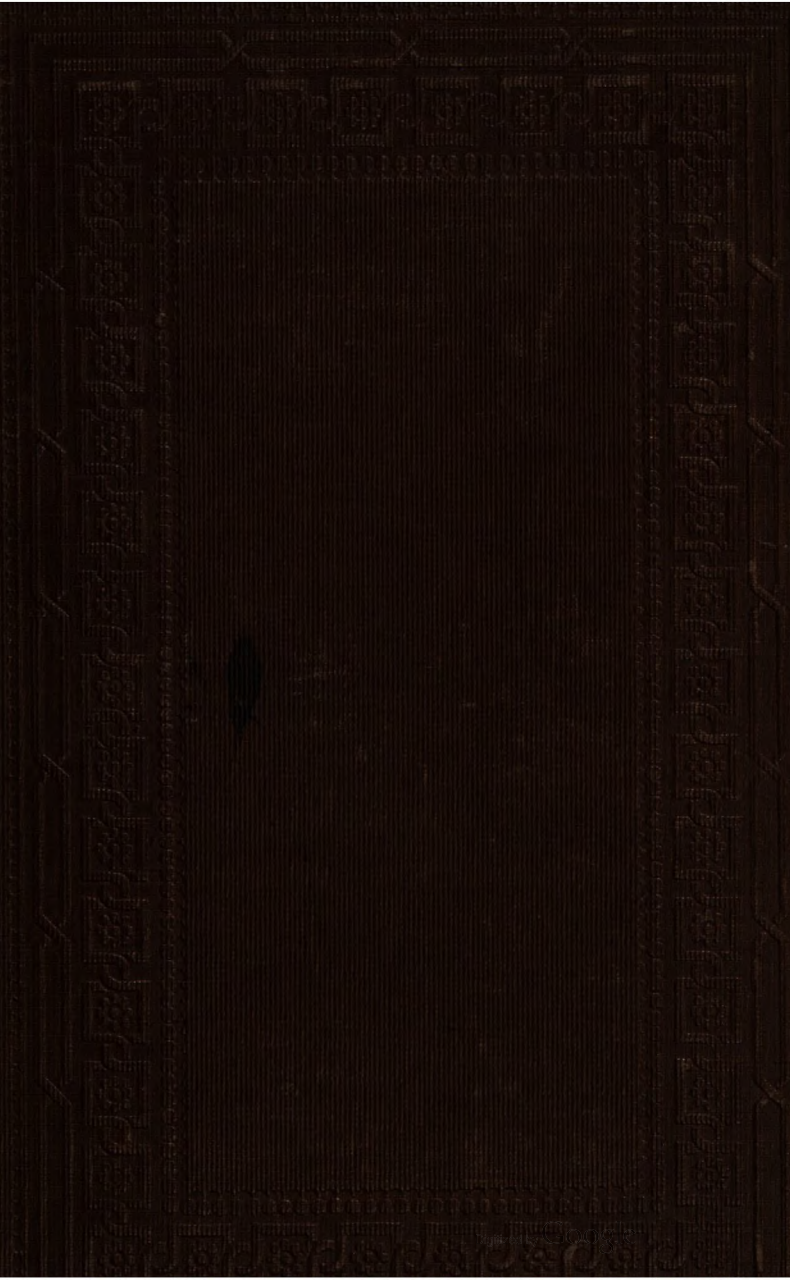

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5.

REDEMPTION DRAWING NIGH.

A DEFENCE

OF

THE PREMILLENNIAL ADVENT.

BY THE

REV. ANDREW A. BONAR,

COLLACE;

AUTHOR OF "A COMMENTARY ON LEVITICUS,"

"LIFE OF M'CHEYNE," ETC.

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up
your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke xxi. 28.)

LONDON:

JAMES NISBET AND CO., 21, BERNERS-STREET.

W. MIDDLETON, DUNDEE.

1847.



MACINTOSH, PRINTER.
GREAT NEW-STREET, LONDON.

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P R E F A C E.

WE must attach importance to every doctrine and fact that is found in the Word of God. All has been selected for us by our Prophet, the Eternal Word, who utters the mind of the Godhead. We must, therefore, find leisure to give a proper measure of attention, and of prayer also, to *every truth* held forth in the Scriptures. Did *Witsius* speak too severely when he said of those who plead exemption from such a range of study in the Divine Word, “*Non advertere divinæ institutioni animum, consulto nescire quæ disci tamen poterant, ascendendi labore deterritum ad culmen non eniti, sed in inferioribus otiose consistere, in eodem primorum elementorum orbe repetito identidem gyro circumagi, et in hoc instituto tanquam tutissimo prudentissimoque sibi placere Non est hoc, quicquid honesti nominis prætextatur, non est hoc (mihi credite) laudibilis modestia, sed culpabilis socordia et damnabilis inertia.*” (De Theol. Mod.)

The writer was led to undertake this work by

meeting brethren who had looked into several books that have been written to prove that the Lord's Coming is still a thousand years distant—especially the recent work of the Rev. David Brown, entitled "*Christ's Second Coming, will it be Premillennial?*" These brethren have asked him how he could shew it reasonable to continue a Premillennialist after perusing what Mr. Brown has so ably written. Now, being as deeply convinced as ever, after reading all the Antimillennarian works within his reach, that *to look for the Coming of the Lord before the Millennium* is to hearken to the shepherd's voice, the author was induced to give this statement of the Scripture argument on the matter. Though he has no authority beyond what is derived from occasional converse with the brethren who hold these same views, yet he ventures to state that what he brings forward in this work is, in the main, an exact representation of the mind of those brethren in the Free Church of Scotland, who are looking for the Premillennial Coming. He writes for Scotland chiefly—and hence, has not made such frequent reference as he might have done to those men of God in England who have searched into this truth.

Things are much changed since Dr. Hamilton took up his pen against Millennarianism. The crudities of "*The Dialogues on Prophecy*" are not

the tenets of those who in our day hold the personal Reign of Christ, though even then it was hard language to use concerning them ; “ there is nothing too absurd and ridiculous to be beyond the reach of their belief.” (Hamilton, p. 107.) But on both sides, those who have handled this matter have too often employed a bitter and dogmatic tone. Mr. Brown, in his recent work is not free from this fault. But these things are fruits of the flesh. Are we both looking along the King’s highway for the appearing of the chariot of one whom we equally love ? Why, then, should we break out into harsh words, and cast unkind imputations on each other because the one says, “ I do not believe the chariot is yet near ; ” while the other maintains, “ It is so near that the sound of its wheels may be heard, and the dust it raises seen.” Richard Hooker would have said, “ Beloved in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the love which in Him we bear unto all that would but seem to be born of Him, it is not the sea of your gall and bitterness that shall ever drown.”

It is remarkable that while Mr. Brown’s work is the ablest attack on Premillennialism that has yet appeared, it nevertheless contains more in it that a Premillennialist can sympathize with than any other Antimillennarian treatise. It is pleasant to be able to observe this, at the very time when we must

necessarily assume the aspect of opponents. It gives us hope. For where there are many points on which we can hold most perfect fellowship, there is room at all times for our dwelling with more delight on these points of agreement than on the points of difference, and thus entering the shadow of the guiding Pillar-cloud ; “and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” (Phil. iii. 16.)

Independently of the point in controversy, there is so much that is solemn and overawing in the fact itself, “THE LORD COMETH,” that the writer looks up in hope that the Master will use what is concerning Himself for the awakening of the unsaved, and building up of his own. And heartily does he adopt the request of the illustrious *Bengel*, who, in writing an *Exposition of the Apocalypse*, expresses his hope, “that, should any who love Christ’s Appearing find that his attempts cast a single ray of light upon what remains obscure in the prophetic Word of God, they would help him by prayer to desire, out of the fulness of the Lamb that was slain, whatever should still appear wanting.”

Collace, 1847.

CHAPTER I.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST, AS IT AFFECTS THE UNSAVED AND THE SAVED.

To call attention to the Prophetic Word is to call attention to the eternal purposes of God. It is tracing some part of the stream of his predestination in its course onward to the ocean of his eternal glory.

It may be asked, "Why is the testimony of Jesus the spirit (or soul) of prophecy?" (Rev. xix. 10.) Because *Christ* the Alpha and Omega, is *God* Alpha and Omega. Christ known is God known. Christ is THE WORD ; that person of the Trinity who gives expression to the thoughts and feelings of Godhead, and utters them to the creature. Hence it follows, that to explore the Prophetic Word concerning Christ, is nothing else than to follow the footsteps of "THE GREAT GOD," going before us into the ages to come. And happily, this looking into the future is not now treated as it was in Bengel's days, when it was "a subject proscribed alike by the world, by the learned, and by the godly."

Many have already taken in hand to show, at some length, the blessings that shall be brought to us by the Second Coming of the Lord. On this account we refrain from handling that topic directly, and mean to confine our remarks here to the *use that ought to be made of this truth* (irrespective of the element of time) *in dealing with the souls of men.*

I. *The fact of the Lord's coming again is fitted to awaken souls.* It sounds an alarm in the ear of sinners. It causes us to hear the sound of coming footsteps, "*the steps of the Anointed One.*"

It ought to be used in preaching the glad tidings. Paul so used it : he pointed to the flaming sword that shall wave over earth at the Lord's return, as an argument fitted to show the folly of remaining an enemy of God. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. i. 8.)

It ought to be used as the very blast of the trumpet which may startle those whose vain hope is, that mercy in God has extinguished his eternal wrath against sin. Christ's Second Coming, "the day of THE WRATH OF THE LAMB," is as much a proof of the Lord's holy determination to punish the unpardoned with endless woe, as his First Coming,

when he came as the Lamb for the slaughter, proved his determination to save his own. "Upon the wicked He shall rain snares ;* fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest :† this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness." (Ps. xi. 6, 7.)

It ought to be used in dealing with all classes of men, wise or unlearned ; for it is fitted to draw the circle round them, and compel them to an immediate decision, as in the presence of the descending Judge. Paul used it thus at Athens. His text was, "The unknown God ;" and as he handled the theme with holy eloquence, he thundered through the heart of the Areopagites, "*God commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent!*" The cry, "*Repent, repent!*" rang over Athens, re-echoed by its hills, while Paul demanded from them submission to his God, proclaiming, "*Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.*" (Acts xvii. 30, 31.)

"*But, perhaps it is yet afar off?*" Suppose it

* מִדְּבָרִים is often used for the fowler's snares. Here the fowler is the Lord. The wicked are caught in snares, the meshes of which they can never break. They are eternally bound ; no hand can burst the net.

† Perhaps alluding to the black tempest at Sinai. Here is the real tempest of wrath avenging a broken law ; only מִדְּבָרִים includes more, as it implies violent heat, as of furious fire.

were not near, as men reckon nearness, (and yet it is equally possible, that the eyes which read these pages may see the Son of man in the clouds ere they have been closed in death,) still the fact remains. *The day of the Lord shall come.* The apostle speaks of its arrival as "Yet a little while" (Heb. x. 37), reckoning eighteen hundred years as a mere handbreadth compared with eternal ages. And Isaiah's view is yet more impressive; for, speaking of an event which is future even yet, he says of it, "Is it not yet a *very little while?*" (xxix. 17.) He speaks of a space that is at least 2,500 years, as "*a very little while,*" when set side by side with eternity. When a lost soul has been in hell 2,500 years, it may cry out in its woe to its fellow, "Is this long, long night never to end?" and his fellow will answer, "Alas, alas! you have been here only 'a little while!' '*a very little while!!*'"

"Knowing," then, "the terror of the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 11), we seek to bring our brethren to the safe chamber (Joshua ii. 18) where the scarlet line hangs out. That same Jesus is now held forth as "the man that is the hiding-place." (Isaiah xxxii. 2.) The man that shall judge, is the man that is the Saviour. Receive Him and all that is in Him. He himself cries, "Come, my people, *enter thou into thy chambers,* and shut thy doors about

thee : hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place." (Isa. xxvi. 20, 21.) The realization of this tremendous certainty of woe is fitted to keep us dealing with men in a decided tone. We are not to invite men to an indistinct hope of salvation. We are not to aim at merely amending their life, as if they might find a hope on that change. Nor is it enough to lead men to right opinions. Along with all this, the conscience and the feelings must be reposing on God. Men need certainty, present certainty, immediate certainty, under the frown of that luring wrath. It is to be found in the person of Jesus ! He gives not barely a hopeful faith ; He imparts *full assurance*. And is it anything less than full assurance that is needed in such circumstances as ours ? Can less than *absolute certainty* of thy salvation be sufficient, when eternity, and such an eternity, may be at the door ? "*Knowing the terror of the Lord,*" we persuade men to attend to that Gospel which gives immediate salvation, and which, when fully seen, imparts in the same hour full assurance.

Our duty, in this respect, is put before us in a remarkable passage, just at the close of the written Word. Our Master who, before He left the earth, sent out his apostles to preach in his name to all

nations repentance and remission of sins, renewed that apostolic commission the last time He spoke from heaven. The same yearning love to sinners remains in the Shepherd. As he was about to leave Patmos, he left this outline of duty for us (Rev. xxii. 17), viz., to be ever calling on the Lord to come again, and at the same time to be ever calling on men to come to Him for life. His words are,—“Let him that heareth say, ‘Come;’ and, ‘*Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the waters of life freely.*’”

It was the manner of the Old Testament Church to cry, “Make haste, my beloved” (Song viii. 14); and we are to be like them. If they so called on Him, specially looking to the hope of his First Coming, yet not looking aside from the Second, but rather including both in the intent expectation of *the Person*; even so we are to call on Him now, not at all looking aside from his First Coming, while yet we refer to the blessed hope of his Second in the cry, “Come!” It is the *Person* who died for us that we long to see again! Amid our best prosperity, and in our happiest hours, we are still intensely to long for our Lord’s appearing. Whatever the benefits be which we enjoy, *himself* is still better far. The prey may be valuable, but “Thou art more glorious and excellent than mountains of prey.” Therefore, we cry, “Come!”

But, amid all this bliss on our part, we are not to forget the sad case of the world around us. We are enjoined as anxiously to cry to the perishing world, "Let him that is athirst come to the waters of life." As Rahab would most anxiously in her heart invite the advance of Joshua to Jericho, and yet as earnestly, in the meantime, press her father and mother and sisters and brother to come into her safe dwelling, so we must act in prospect of our Lord's appearing.

The Church on earth is represented as in John's attitude, listening at Christ's feet; and hence is called, "*the person that heareth.*" Now the call to the Church runs thus,—1. Say to Christ, "*Come.*" 2. Cry to the world around you, "*Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the waters of life freely.*"* We are to look up, and then turn and speak to sinners. We proclaim the terror of the Lord to the unsaved, and the bliss

* This form of sentence often occurs. Thus (Rev. i. 11), saying, "I am Alpha and Omega," and, "What thou seest, write." So Heb. i. 8, 10. "Thy throne, O God," and "Thou, Lord, hast laid the foundation." So 1 Tim. ii. 19; Mark vii. 10. It is thus we explain Nehem. ix. 5, "Then the Levites said, Stand up and bless the Lord your God for ever and ever:" and, "Blessed be thy glorious name," &c. When they had said to the people, "Stand up," they next began to address God.

awaiting the redeemed on that day which we seek to hasten on ; and by all this we are to call on men to obey the command, "*Let him that is athirst come.*" Whatever be your state of soul at present, whether unhappy because of a disappointing world, or unhappy because still unpossessed of the love of God,—whatever be the cause of your misery, come to the Saviour whom we have found. *Thirst* is a description that marks you to be meant ; indeed, it gives warrant to all to come whose souls long for the favour and love of God. Yes ; and if you doubt this to be its ample signification, "*whosoever will*" sweeps away all hesitation, and "*freely*" renders you inexcusable if you even delay.

Each believing man, as well as minister, is commanded to press this offer on the perishing world, while going onward to his rest. We are not to enter glory alone. Each of us must seek to bring in whom we can. The remembrance of the Lord's coming should have this effect upon us. We would fain have a great reward and a bright crown, and fain would we be found so doing when the Master comes ; so we cry, "*Come, Lord,*" and then turn to sinners and cry, "*Come ye to the waters.*" O, hear the call ! O, listen to our invitation ! You "*hated Him without a cause*" (John xv. 25), you could give no reason for your hatred

of him ; it was *gratuitous* hatred (*δωρεαν*) ; there was *no reason in God* to justify it. Yet, such is his grace, He whose ways are not our ways, comes to you and offers you *love, gratuitous love*, “waters of life *freely*” (*δωρεαν*), when there is not *one reason in you* why He should have so done.

II. *The Second Coming summons attention to the glad tidings of salvation.* It leads us to the First Coming. It fixes attention upon what the Gospel really is. It proclaims, “He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you.” (Acts iii. 20.) Our attention is drawn to the person of Jesus. We are directed to One who is to come ; and this is that same Jesus to whom sinners are directed now for their salvation.

Our Lord proclaimed the glad tidings often in this form,—“Come *unto me*, and I will give you rest.” “If any man thirst, let him come *unto me* and drink.” “*In me* ye shall have peace.” He drew our attention to the person who saves. He seemed to intimate, that when the sinner’s soul was drawn to *the Person*, other things would follow. It was not his benefits so much as his Person that he held forth ; not the mode of redemption, so much as the Redeemer ; not the work, so much as the worker. Now, in habitually contemplating the Second Coming of the Lord, our eye is fixed on the person of Jesus ; our soul is arrested, not by

abstract truths, but by a living Person. The God-man who comes is the grand object that fills the soul.

Is not this the very position of faith? And is not everything important that strengthens this habit of gazing on the Person of Christ? Faith finds all its object there. As Bunyan says, "Here, indeed, is my life, namely, the birth of this man, the death and resurrection of this man, the Son of Mary, the Son of man, the Son of God, the true God! I say, here is my life; if I see this *without* me, by the operation of the Spirit *within* me. I am safe, I am at peace, I am comforted, I am encouraged; and I know that my comfort, peace, and encouragement is true, and given me from heaven by the Father of mercies." "O Son of God, grace was in all thy tears! Grace came bubbling out from thy bleeding side! Here is grace indeed, unsearchable riches of grace; grace to make angels wonder, to make sinners happy, to make devils astonished."

The contemplation of Christ's Second Coming does thus help us to fix upon the very marrow of his First Coming. It engages our heart to approach *Himself*, to deal with *Himself*, to dwell on *Himself*. Was it not thus that he sought to teach salvation to the men of Nazareth? He proclaimed (Luke iv. 18, 21) good tidings and the

acceptable year of the Lord ; and while every eye was on Himself, he said, " This day is this scripture *fulfilled* in your ears." How ? Because *He* who is the substance of these tidings sat there among them. Their eye was surveying *the Person* of the Saviour. They were handling the shell, and had they but penetrated the heart, salvation would have been theirs ! A true acquaintance with *that Person* would have led them to God. " Except *we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man* we have no life in us." (John vi. 53.) Abstract truths, dry orthodoxy, nay, even sense of sin, and anxieties to be holy, are not salvation. We must have the *Son of man* as our meat and drink. His work in our flesh feeds our guilty conscience. His wearing our flesh still, meets our feelings. " In Him," it has been said, " we see God's heart and character and government all laid open, and man's full salvation lying perfect and free in its bosom." The history of all God's holy love is there—in Him. And what we sometimes call real and vital *religion*, is, properly and truly, acquaintance with Him, a true and vital acquaintance. All is made to centre in the person of Christ ; the contemplations and affections of the believer travelling between his abasement and his exaltation, and finding in Jesus, under both aspects together, a complete salvation.

But in addition to keeping clearly before us the true Gospel, this fixing of our eye on Christ's Person leads us to *assurance of hope*.* The very thought of the Lord's Second Coming raises in us the conviction that we need *assurance of our salvation* ere we can welcome that event which opens eternity. The man who is to delight in Christ's Second Coming must have not only a hope, and a good hope, of his own salvation, but must have *assurance of eternal life* in Him, rejoicing in that blessed hope as being his sure heaven. And while this prospect of the Lord's Coming enforces the necessity for "making our calling and election sure," it does, at the same time, greatly aid the believing soul in so doing. For, it *concentrates his attention on the Person* of Immanuel, and, in so doing, it puts him in the true posture of one who would see full grounds for rising above all fear. Fixing his whole soul on Immanuel himself, the believer finds therein such abundant proof of God's ability to

* There are three kinds of assurance mentioned in the Word, and they are often misunderstood. The *first* is, *assurance of faith* (Heb. x. 22), certainty of acceptance, arising from the belief of God's testimony. 2. Full *assurance of understanding* (Col. ii. 2), the soul getting more and more established according as it sees the fulness and riches of Christ. 3. *Assurance of hope* (Heb. vi. 11), which is the saved man, in possession of acceptance, looking into the future for the things hoped for, sure he shall yet have them all.

clear away the guilt of the guilty as gives his soul deep, deep rest. *In the act of looking on this Saviour*, he sees "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." (Luke xix. 38.) Like the wise men gazing on the re-appearing star, he rejoices with exceeding great joy in the certainty of what is in Jesus, or in the certainty of what is in the bosom of Godhead, toward the coming sinner. His warrant for assurance is the fulness of grace in God, not some particles of holiness in himself; and hence, as he meditates on *the Person* of Jesus, the Divine warrant to sinners sparkles in his view so gloriously, that he cannot see room for hesitation.

It is in such ways as these that this blessed hope is fitted to send us ever back to the Gospel tidings. Instead of drawing us from the First Coming, its legitimate influence is all the other way. Although it has become common to brand the constant reference to Christ's Second Coming with the imputation of perniciously tending to make us undervalue his First Advent, the truth is altogether otherwise.

It may be said, however, "Has not this been the fact? Have not very many who most enthusiastically proclaimed their interest in the Lord's Second Coming, shown comparatively a slight interest in the Gospel of his suffering unto death?"

This we do not deny. But we unhesitatingly assert, notwithstanding, that *their neglect of the Gospel was not caused by their attention to the Second Advent*. No ; it was in some cases caused by previously-existing tendencies to change ; so much so, that many of this class will be found to have lost very much of their interest in this very matter, after the lapse of a few years. In others of them, this neglect of the Gospel arose from their *not sufficiently attending to what is set before us in the Second Advent*. Pre-millennialism is excitable if separate from the other truths of Scripture, but is not so at all in connexion with other truth. As we say of a gloomy Christian, "He is gloomy, not because of, but *in spite of*, his religion." Or of an inconsistent professor, "He is unholy, not because he has Gospel views, but because he has too little of them." So we say in this case. These persons have not attended sufficiently to that very object which unhappily leads them to neglect the Gospel. They ought to have attended to it more. They ought to have penetrated to the kernel ; whereas they have been satisfied with the shell. They have gazed on the glorious robe in which the Coming One is to be attired, and there their eye lingers ; but had they pressed on farther, and gazed more intently on his

person, they would have been of necessity fed with the Gospel, and been more than ever absorbed in the Gospel.

This is our reply to all who so fondly excuse themselves from attending to this matter, by alleging that it has turned some away from the Gospel. We charge them with superficial study of the matter, and with most inconclusive reasoning. Mr. Brown, in his late work against the *Pre-millennial* theory, has not fallen into this error. On the contrary, he has stated his conviction, that the Church loses very great blessing when its attention is turned away from this subject, saying, that "It is an expectation which *nothing else* can compensate the loss of." (P. 385.) And then he adds, "They love his appearing, because they love Himself." Yes, it is even so ; although Satan may have tried, by a thousand extravagancies of opinion, to prejudice Christ's dearest disciples against the hope of seeing again "*that same Jesus.*" All Pre-millennialists cordially agree with him in his statement. And well might it be said by another, "How strange that Christians do not think and speak more of the Second Coming of Christ, when it is expressly said to be 'the blessed hope.' The believer's death may be gain, and the presence of the Spirit may be unspeakable comfort ; but neither the one nor the other is the 'glorious

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appearing' of our great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and, therefore, not *the blessed hope*. 'Christ's personal coming is alone entitled to be so called.' " *

* "Texts for the Times." By the Rev. Robert Macdonald, Blairgowrie.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT OUR FATHERS FELT REGARDING THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

WE might venture to say, that the habitual thought of Christ's Second Coming formed an element of lofty character in almost all the men who have obtained a good report in other days. It lay in their minds, not as a dry doctrine, admitted because it could not be denied, but as a living principle of hope, cherished as well as admitted. We do not, at present, inquire whether or not they looked for this blessed hope through a vista of a thousand years, or whether they supposed it to be at the door ; but we wish to show that *the event itself*, the coming of the King in his glory, was habitually in their minds, and formed a subject of refreshing meditation to their active, and often weary souls.

It seems that COLUMBA, in sending forth labourers from Iona, in the sixth century, to evangelize Scotland, often referred to this glorious hope to cheer them under hardship. "*Thou shalt awake from the sleep of death to the resurrection of life,*" used

to be one clause in his exhortations ;* and his modern biographer, Dr. Smith (p. 119), represents him as ever holding up the higher rewards and brighter prospects of rising with the martyrs in the First Resurrection. How interesting to know that our Western Isles have been gilded with this Blessed Hope long ages passed.

The incidental manner in which JOHN KNOX refers to it is sufficient to show the place it habitually held in his mind. His letter to the "Faithful in London, Newcastle, and Berwick," has this clause also in its title,—*"And to all others within the realm of England that love the Coming of our Lord Jesus."* He writes another *"Comfortable epistle"*, sent to the afflicted Church of Christ, exhorting them to bear his cross with patience, *looking every hour for his coming again*, to the great comfort and consolation of his chosen." His letter to his mother-in-law has this sentence prefixed to the salutation, *"He comes and shall not tarry*, in whom is our comfort and final felicity." And, in his "Treatise on Fasting," he yet more clearly shews what his noble spirit felt to be desirable in that day. "What were this else," he exclaims, "but to reform the face of the whole earth, which never was, nor yet shall be, till that righteous King

* Adomnan's words are, "In resurrectionem vitæ de somno mortis evigilabis."

and Judge appear for the restoration of all things."

In the Confession of Faith, mainly drawn up by Knox, in 1560, the Reformed Church unitedly testify, that "the time of refreshing and restitution of all things shall come," and that "*the remembrance of that day is inestimable comfort.*"

It is somewhat difficult exactly to ascertain how it was that the Reformers were led to expect the Coming of Christ. We know, however, that it was so. Luther said, "It often comes into my thoughts, that perhaps the Day of Judgment will arrive before I have finished my translation of the Bible." * But let us proceed.

Henry Balnaves, one of the Lords of Session, compiled a "Treatise on Justification" in 1548, while a prisoner in Rouen. The motto he selects is, "He shall come, and shall not tarry, in whom who believeth shall not be confounded." He speaks of "the death of Abel and the life of Cain" as exemplifying what the true Church is to expect "on to the Second Coming of Christ." And, in chapter xvii., writes, "As the Fathers believed the First Coming of Christ, ever desiring and looking for the same by faith, even so now we believe and look for his Second Coming, and *most fervently desire* the same, to be delivered of this mortal body

* Michelet's "Life," p. 210.

of sin, that we may rule eternally with Him in glory."

We have next the testimony of a faithful minister of Christ, not long after Knox's death, *Robert Rollock*, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, who may be said to have introduced into Scotland the true method of Scriptural exposition, and of whom Andrew Melville wrote

"Fidorum ducum comes fidelis,
Ursini et Junii, Tremelliique,
Calvini quoque, Bezae, Oleviani."

This man of God died in 1599. He left behind him a series of lectures, printed after his death, on "The Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ." In his fifty-sixth Lecture he thus writes, in reference to Luke xxiv. 52, "We may perceive what is the ground whereupon the solid consolation of a Christian soul arises. It arises even from the hope of the glorious Returning of the Lord Jesus again to judge the world. There is nothing that furnishes such joy to the faithful soul as this hope does. Indeed, it is true, the Lord gives other grounds of consolation while we are here; and namely (especially) He gives us his Spirit to counsel and guide us through all the difficulties of our pilgrimage; and the joy that the faithful find in his presence is very great. He gives us faith also to comfort us, whereby, in some

measure, presently we feel the presence of Christ and his spiritual grace in our souls. But except, with the Spirit and faith, we had a hope that the Lord Jesus should return again in his own time in glory, we could not have solid joy and consolation. For if in this life only * we hoped in Christ, and had no hope that he will return again in glory and raise our mortal bodies from the dead, then, as the apostle says, ‘Of all men we were most miserable.’ (1 Cor. xv. 19.) And why should not the hope of this Returning comfort our souls and make them rejoice? For at his Returning we look and hope for the glorifying of these our bodies, and for eternal life.” Having spoken thus, and quoted several passages of the Word on the subject, he concludes,—“How happy is that man who earnestly looks and waits for the blessed and glorious Coming again of the Lord to judgment, for that hope shall comfort and uphold him in all his troubles and distresses.”

John Welsh, imprisoned in Blackness Castle in 1606, thus wrote, like John in Patmos, “When shall I be satisfied with thy face? When shall I be drunk with thy pleasures? Come, Lord Jesus,

* The passage alluded to, 1 Cor. xv. 19, loses its force in our version. It is properly, “If in this life we have hoped in *Christ alone*,” that is, if our hopes were all embarked in that one vessel, and if it never return to greet our eyes, then we are truly miserable!

and tarry not. The Spirit says, '*Come*;' the Bride says, '*Come*.' Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly, and tarry not." Looking out at the window on the sunshine which fell on the river Forth, that flowed full in view, and lighted up hill and dale, and then listening to the tramp of the soldier who guarded him, he writes again,—“All glory be unto my God; Angels and saints, praise ye Him! O thou earth, hills and mountains, be glad; you shall not be wearied any more with the burden of corruption whereunto you have been subject, through the wickedness of mankind. Lift up your heads and be glad, for a fire shall make you clean from all your corruptions and vanity, wherewith many years you have been infected. Let the Bride rejoice; let all the saints rejoice; for the day of the marriage with the Bridegroom, even the Lamb of God, is at hand!”

There were some in those days who looked for the Kingdom at the Coming of Christ. What *John Livingstone's* own views were, I do not find him stating fully; but one Sabbath, while addressing the communicants at Carluke (May 29, 1659), he exclaims, “It may be some professors think in these days to get a crown, kingdom, and throne; I know not if ever that shall be, but I think it will not be till the Jews be brought in.”

There are few in Scotland who have not been

affected by the strains in which *Samuel Rutherford* expresses his longing for his Lord's appearing. He did not look for Christ's personal reign, but he loved his appearing. His words are full of the spirit of poetry. When weary with the perverseness of men, and often heavy laden with the desolate state of the Church, he wrote in Aberdeen, in 1637, "O, when will we meet? O, how long is it to the dawning of the Marriage Day? O, sweet Jesus, take wide steps! O my Lord, come over mountains at one stride! O, my Blessed, flee as a roe or young hart upon the mountains of separation. O, if He would fold the heavens together like an old cloak, and shovel time and days out of the way, and make ready in haste the Lamb's wife for her husband!" At another time, finding as he did only one person in the town with whom he had sweet fellowship, he writes again: "O, fairest among the sons of men, why stayest thou so long away? O heavens, more fast! O time, run, run, and hasten the marriage day, for love is tormented with delays. O angels, O seraphim who stand before Him, O blessed spirits who now see his face, set Him on high; for when ye have worn your harps in his praise, all is too little, and is nothing, to cast the smell of the praise of that fair flower, that fragrant Rose of Sharon, through many worlds!" On another day he thus encourages a

follower of the Lamb, who like the woman at the Cross, had already been bold for his name,—“Look up and see who is coming. Lift up your head; He is coming to save, in garments dyed in blood, and travelling in the greatness of his strength. I laugh, I smile, I leap for joy, to see Christ coming to save you so quickly. O, such wide steps as Christ taketh. Three or four hills are but a step to Him. ‘He skippeth over mountains.’” (P. 62.) He teaches one of his friends, Earlston the younger, to endure hardship patiently, ever looking out at our prison-windows, crying, “Lord, let thy kingdom come! O let the Bridegroom come. And, O day, O fair day, O everlasting summer-day, dawn and shine out; break out from under the black sky, and shine!” (P. 196.) To his brother in the faith and patience of Christ, *John Livingstone*,—“Let us not fear or faint. . . . It is now nigh the Bridegroom’s entering into his chamber. Let us awake and go in with Him.” And so to Lady Kenmure; “Look to the East. The day-sky is breaking. Think not that Christ loseth time, or lingereth unsuitably. O fair, fair, and sweet morning!” And yet how explicitly he tells the same “elect and noble lady,” “The Lord hath told you what you should be doing till He come. ‘Wait and hasten,’ saith Peter, ‘for the coming of our Lord.’ All is night that is here, in respect of ignorance

and daily-ensuing troubles, one always making way to another as the ninth wave of the sea to the tenth. Therefore, sigh and long for the dawning of that morning, and the breaking of that day of the Coming of the Son of Man when the shadows shall flee away. Persuade yourself the King is coming. Read his letter sent before Him, Rev. iii. 11. 'Behold, I come quickly.' Wait with the wearied night-watch for the breaking of the eastern sky." (P. 329.) Ever distressed with the sad condition of the land and of the earth, this was his consolation,—“The Lord's bride will be up and down: above the water swimming, and under the water sinking, until her lordly and mighty Redeemer and husband set his head through these skies, and come with his fair court to rid all their pleas and give them the longed-for inheritance: and then we shall lay down our swords, and triumph, and fight no more.” (P. 470.) “What do we here but sin and suffer? and when shall the night be gone, the shadows flee away, and the morning of that long, long day, without cloud or night, dawn? The Spirit and the Bride say, ‘Come.’ O, when shall the Lamb's wife be ready, and the Bridegroom say, ‘Come?’” (P. 626.)

In his time, the belief of Christ's Pre-millennial Coming prevailed in England among the members of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. Principal

Baillie in one of his letters writes, "The most of the chief divines here, not only Independents, but others, such as Twisse, Marshall, Palmer, and many more, are express *Chiliasts*," i. e. believers in the Millennial Reign of Christ on earth. Few in Scotland held that view, but they loved the Lord's Appearing.

Andrew Gray, who died at the early age of twenty-two, preached Christ with singular ripeness of judgment, about the same time. His soul seemed often filled with the Spirit; "the lamp was stirred into a sudden blaze," says one who knew him. His joy in the Lord's coming is seen in what is left of his writings. At the Communion-table see him solemnly looking up amid the guests: "O when shall these blue heavens be rent, and we admitted to the marriage-supper of the Lamb! I shall say no more; but long for the day when all the language of heaven and earth shall be, Come, Come. Then shall Christ be crying, '*Come, Come.*' And ten thousands of angels crying, '*Come, Come.*' And the Bride that is below shall cry, '*Come, Come.*' And they that are in the exercise of faith, saying, '*Come, Come.*' What a blessedness will that be, think ye, that even these cursed thoughts of ours shall yet live to cry, '*Come, come, blessed Lord Jesus.*'" This occurs in one of his addresses to the communicants at the Lord's table; and how

suitable is it then to point believers forward to the "new wine in the kingdom of God." This man of God felt that as we there "show the Lord's death *till he come*" (1 Cor. xi.), so it was most natural to lift up our heads then, and look out for his Appearing. Should we ever keep this feast of the Supper without distinctly and fully gazing on these coming glories, of which the table of the Lord is a type ?

His friend, *James Durham*, who died 1658, was like-minded. The book of *Revelation*, and the *Song of Solomon*, which is the Old Testament apocalypse of the Person of Christ, formed the subject of two valuable commentaries. And thus he speaks on Song viii. 14, "We take this desire to look mainly to his *Second Coming*, because that only can perfect believers' consolation, and put an end to their prayers.* Till he come, their consolation cannot be full, and all shadows are not away. (ii. 17.) There is ever something to be done, and therefore they have ever something to pray for ; to wit, that His kingdom may come, till that time. This is the great joint and main suit of all believers. They all concur in this (Rev. xxii. 17), 'The Spirit and the Bride say, Come.' It is essential to all who have the Spirit to join in this suit. And the Bride cannot but be supposed to love

* Referring probably to Psalm lxxii. 20.

the last Appearing of our Lord Jesus, which will perfect all her desires. And this coming of his was prophesied of by Enoch, the seventh from Adam, (Jude ver. 14,) and was delighted in by believers, (Psalm xcvi. 12 ; xcvi. 6, 7), before Solomon wrote this." He then adds ; "Those who are best acquainted with fellowship with Christ here-away, and are clearest of their interest in him, will be most desirous of, and most pressing after his Second Coming ;* and the little acquaintance we may have with him here-away is the reason that so few are taken up with this suit." In the close of one of his sermons on Rev. xxii. 20, he says, "I would lay it upon you, as ye would evidence yourselves native branches of this vine, and members of the body whereof He is the Head, and a part of the Bride, say, 'Come, Lord Jesus.'"

Our Covenanters speak less of the Lord's appearing than we might have expected of persons so often made to see their brethren sent by cruel deaths to join "the souls under the altar." It was not, indeed, forgotten. *Hugh M'Kail*, in 1666, said on the scaffold, "This is my comfort, that I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth ; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God : whom I shall see for myself, and mine

* See page 12.

eyes shall behold (*pointing to his eyes*), and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." In 1679, *John Clide* thus expressed his hope of resurrection—"I die in the faith of this, that though my body should hang till it consume all away, and be scattered up and down all the earth, till there be not so much as an hair's breadth of it together . . . yet it will all be gathered together again, and a hair-breadth of it will not be lost, when King Christ comes with the sound of the Archangel, and the sound of the last Trumpet, and the dead in Christ shall be first raised." In a letter of *Walter Smith*, (who suffered death in 1679, along with Donald Cargill,) a godly friend is thus dealt with ; " You say you think you have not fled out of yourself to Christ for righteousness. A mistake here, I confess, is of greater consequence than all that is in the world besides. But some that have indeed laid hold on that everlasting rock, our blessed Lord Jesus, for life and salvation, cannot be persuaded that they have so done, they would so fain be sure. And here also Satan strikes in to fill the soul with anxiety, to divert from necessary duties, and to rob us of our comfortable rejoicing that we should have in entertaining the faith of our Lord's appearing."*

* It is this same Covenanter who, amid his wanderings and dangers wrote directions to a praying Society, one of which

When our Covenanting Fathers drew the sword, they forsook the attitude of "patient waiting for Christ." But even those who never drew the sword were often so engrossed with their testimony to his *offices*, as to overlook in some measure the *living Person* to whom they testified. Distracted and harassed day and night by opposition and violence, they issued their testimonies to the truth, and "overcame by the blood of the Lamb and the Word of his testimony, and loved not their lives unto the death." On the whole, however, there is an omission of the *Person*, while his threefold offices are most nobly and magnificently asserted. The cedars, and streams, and fragrance of Lebanon are celebrated well, but we wish to hear more of Lebanon itself in its majesty. Many ministers in our day have been so occupied with doctrines and illustrations of orthodox truth, as to dwell little on the *God-man*; and so it may have been then. But when the *living Person*, as well as his office, was felt very deeply, there do we find the hope of his Appearing also. Welsh and Rutherford are proofs of this; and the following are the words of the latter, "that the old off-caste Israel for unbelief should never be forgotten, especially in these meetings; that the promised day of their engrafting again by faith may be hastened; and that dead weight of blood removed from them which their fathers took upon them." See the "Short Account of the Life and Death of Walter Smith."

breathings of a soldier of Christ. They occur in the private diary of *Walter Pringle*,* written about the year 1665. "So shall it be with those of his own who shall be living in the Last Day, even the great day of our Lord. Blessed be he who gives me to expect that day with every measure of faith, hope, and joy. I am even best when, in my mind, I am hasting to this day, and joining with all those who say, 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus.' O ! He is coming, and with him a glorious train of angels and saints, who esteem the more of their glory that it is all given to them by Him !"

Enough perhaps has been advanced to show what, in other days, were the feelings of our fathers in Scotland regarding the Day of the Lord.

We could refer to the testimony of many of the English martyrs, such as *Bradford*, or *Latimer*, who thought it possible that Christ might come in his day. And were we to inquire among the Puritans, we could adduce Joseph Alleine's letter to the people of Taunton, "*Of the Second Coming of Christ*," wherein he breaks out thus—"O, my soul, look out and long ! O, my brethren, be you as the mother of Sisera." Or we might quote John Janeway's most remarkable view of that Day given

* Republished in the "Select Biographies" of the Wodrow Society.

in the brief narrative of his "Holy Life and Triumphant Death," in 1657.* But I wish to leave with the reader the full testimony to its importance given by *the saints of Scotland* in other days. The voice here is full, and let the reader be assured that, like seraph crying to seraph, there is no discord among the saints in their longing for Christ's Appearing, whenever *the Person* himself is fully seen.

* Some of his sayings are, "If I were sure the day of judgment were to begin within an hour, I should be glad with all my heart. Would it not rejoice me more than Joseph's waggons did old Jacob? I lately dreamed that it was come. Methought," &c. "And then I cried out, 'I have waited for thy salvation, O God;' and so I mounted into the air to meet my Lord in the clouds."

CHAPTER III.

THE SIN OF MINISTERS AND PEOPLE IN NEGLECTING THE COMING OF THE LORD.

IN the *Pastoral Address* of the General Assembly of the *Free Church of Scotland*, issued July 1845, it is said, "Blessed be God, his Church in all its various branches has had her attention turned more earnestly to the predicted events of the Latter Times and the circumstances connected with *that Second Coming of her great Head and Lord*, which, whatever obscurity may hang over its details, should ever have been, *and now more and more, must ever be*, in its grand outlines, THE POLESTAR OF HER HOPE." This view bears much resemblance to what our fathers felt.

No Christian denies the fact of the Second Coming of Christ. But very many, even of the most godly in later days, have failed to meditate much upon this blessed hope. It has been left, like an old sword, looked at and its properties occasionally descanted upon, but unused by Christ's soldiers in battle. It is not often a subject of

prayer either in public or in private. It is not much brought forward to view, even at the Communion-table, where so specially we are said to show, or exhibit, the death of Jesus as the price paid for our ransom, "*Till he come.*" There has been comparatively little conversation on the marrow of this blessed hope among Christians, although there have been frequent controversies as to its time and manner ; and there is, we fear, little calm meditation upon it by the believer in his closet hours, or under his fig-tree.

The root of the neglect lies here ; men have not felt the joy and the holy influences which the Second Coming yields. There have been, indeed, other causes that have kept saints away from the subject.* Some have had such a dread of being supposed to be believers in the opinion that his Coming is previous to the Millennium, that they have refrained from saying much on the subject in any form. In the case of such, whether ministers or private Christians, Satan has gained an advantage. Mr. Brown, who is no Premillennialist, has taught another lesson. With most decided opposition to the time maintained in these views, he unites a singular love to eth Lord's Coming itself. "Never do we please Christ so much,"* says he, "as when we

* Page 25.

refuse to be comforted, even with his own consolations, save in the prospect of his personal return."

Some have even set it down as a mark of wisdom and sober-mindedness to keep silence on the subject except by the most general and superficial references. With these, however, the whole subject of prophecy stands in abeyance. Mr. Brown has said with some severity, "The generality even of intelligent Christians—shall we add of Christian ministers—have still some lingering hold of the childish and miserable notion, bred of the Rationalism of last century, that prophecy is useless till it be fulfilled."* Is it not this idea that prejudices many? If so, they are altogether wrong. They utterly set aside the holy injunction, "*We have also a more sure word of prophecy,*"—more sure than even the testimony of the witnesses of things past and fulfilled, "*whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.*"†

If those who dread and reject the Premillennial view of the Lord's Coming would maintain their opposition with any strength, they must at least

* Page 7.

† Evidently meaning "Until the day of the Lord come with all it is to reveal, and Christ himself the Morning-star arise, bringing the manifestations of glory to your souls."

preach the *fact* of the Lord's Coming *in all the prominence given to it in Scripture*. Mr. Brown fully sees this and urges it, saying to his brethren, that "if they preach it not with the fulness and frequency that Scripture warrants, or if they put anything in its place, they will not succeed ; Pre-millennialists who preach him bringing his reward with him will have the better of you. And so they ought."*

It is singular that so many overlook the fact that TRUE HOLINESS cannot be fully cultivated apart from this realized hope. There must be a stream of blessed motives flowing into us *from this source*; otherwise our sanctification is necessarily imperfect. For in Titus ii. 11—14 we have the subject of holiness stated thus. It is *founded* on grace ; it begins in a sinner as soon as (but not before) he discovers the grace that is in God to the guilty. This discovery of grace becomes the hinge of future holiness—"the grace of God . . . *teaching us*." Then as to its *nature*. Holiness, stated negatively, is a denying of all that is contrary to the first table of the law, "ungodliness ;" and all that is against the second table, "worldly lusts," or inordinate motions towards the things that the world presents in its varied relations. Stated positively, holiness is "living *soberly*," or occupying the position which

* Page 385.

a calm consideration of our gifts shews us to be fitted for ; "*righteously*," regarding our neighbour's rights, loving him as ourselves ; "*godly*," regarding God's demands, living in fellowship with Him. But even this, done under the motive of "grace," is not all. Along with all this, a truly holy man sits loose to the world and longs for glory. The *keystone* of all is, "*looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious Appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*" Uneasy at every remaining imperfection, troubled by every unattained degree of grace, vexed at a low state of feeling, the man who walks on the highway of holiness is ever looking forward into the bosom of the future—beyond even death, which only brings partial deliverance—to "*that blessed hope.*" This unceasing regard to the Lord's Coming is surely one scriptural ingredient in all real holiness. And if neglected, the neglect entails on the person a necessary defect from which he might otherwise have been free.

We ministers may sin in not realizing our position in reference to our coming Lord. "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, *who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom*—preach the word." (2 Tim. iv. 1.) Paul thus sets us in front of the throne of the coming Saviour every time we enter the pulpit, or lift up our voice to address souls. And

yet some are offended if any make too frequent reference (as they think) to that great day. The danger is all on the other side. If we ministers *rarely refer* to this topic, or *rarely pray* for the Lord's Coming with hearty desire for it, we fall into the sin of "shunning to declare the whole counsel of God." Surely if we put truth into a place where it is little seen, we are shunning to declare it. Surely we are doing so with the Lord's Coming if we seldom urge it, and seldom pray regarding it, while the Word of God puts it before us in a place where no eye can fail to see it, and no ear fail to hear it.

And should any one say, "*O, but we preach death, and going to meet Christ;*" this is by no means satisfactory. It is, on the contrary, a glaring evasion. Why not preach these truths, and *also* Christ's Coming? Mr. Brown may again speak to such.* "The coming of Christ to individuals at death is *not fitted* for taking that place in the view of the believer which Scripture assigns to the Second Advent." The reasons are, 1. *Death*, even the death of believers, is intrinsically grievous and repulsive. 2. The bliss of disembodied spirits is incomplete and fragmentary. 3. To put death in the place of Christ's Coming is to destroy one of the finest collocations of Divine truth. We look back to the first coming by faith; to the second, we look

* Page 27—29.

forward by hope. "These are the two pivots on which turns the Christian life, the two wings on which believers mount up as eagles. If either is clipped, the soul's flight heavenward is low, feeble, and fitful."

We need all our weapons and all our armour. Let us not say, "I have the shield ; what need I then the spear ?" "I have the sword ; what need I the helmet ?" We need the panoply, especially in these last days. And if, as we have already seen, the habit of looking to Christ's Second Coming directs us more and more to the first, surely it is folly, as well as sin, to overlook its prominence. Shall we keep silence in our preaching in regard to Christ's *resurrection*, because there is so much to say about his *death* ? Nay rather, for the sake of showing the power of his *death* you will seek to set, side by side with it, his *resurrection*. It should be even so with us in preaching the two Comings of the Lord.

It is a truth, the preaching of which the Holy Ghost will bless. He will bless our own souls in the study and preaching of it ; and he will bless it to our people. For it is a doctrine well fitted to arouse from sleep, like the cry of the shipmaster to Jonah ; and well fitted to direct attention to the simple Gospel, by fixing the sinner's eye on Christ's

Person, the God-man, clothed in mediatorial offices. And is it not this truth which the Holy Ghost delights to bless? Does not he occupy himself among men in "taking the things of Christ, and shewing them?" Our Master declared, "*He will glorify me;*" and are not the very materials on which He works here? But, if this truth be neglected, or obscured, or left unexplained and unenforced, can we wonder if the Holy Spirit be grieved?

The Holy Spirit is no doubt grieved in this particular by those who rarely meditate upon, and rarely pray regarding the Lord's appearing. The Holy Spirit loves that day, it being a day of glory to Christ. *The Spirit* says, "Come." (Rev. xxii. 17.) If then either minister or people have no positive love to that Appearing, no longing for it, no warmth or glow of feeling in the prospect of it, they must be in a state that is grieving to Him.

We do not forget, however, that we need nothing less than the Divine Spirit to teach us this portion of truth.* It is not enough that the lesson itself

* Mr. Bickersteth in his "Apostolic Benediction" notices, from Luke xviii. 31—34, how closed may be the minds of God's own servants to the plainest truths, conveyed in the plainest language. "The Son of man shall be *mocked*,

is Divine, we must also have a Divine instructor ; not only a sharp sword, but an Almighty hand to wield it. It is so with respect to this doctrine of the Lord's Coming. It may be learnt by carnal men as any other piece of knowledge ; and it may be received and assented to by spiritual men among the other articles of their creed. But there is a spiritual reception of it which is the effect of the Holy Ghost's teaching. We say to believers who are indifferent on this matter, You have received other doctrines with *the unction that teacheth all things* ; have you received this solemn doctrine *with that same unction* ? As in conversion we need resurrection-power—the same power that raised up Jesus—to remove the barriers in our soul that hid a full salvation from our view ; so ever after, when any new truth of a spiritual nature is to be taught us, it seems declared to us (Phil. iii. 18) that we need the very same power to remove the scale that blinded us to it. O that my soul may thus be led into the secret of God. “I am a stranger on the earth ; hide not thy commandments from me !” Worthy Mr. Durham, a little before he fell asleep in Jesus, left an example for us to follow. He

spit upon, put to death, and rise again.” But they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them.

desired one who stood by his bedside to write while he dictated the following words as the close of his commentary on the book of Revelation. "And now, O my soul, when all says 'Come,' and concurs in a sweet harmony, seeing thou hast heard, and dost hear the call of the Gospel, say with the Bride and with the Spirit, 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.'"

CHAPTER IV.

PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE MISUNDERSTOOD, THROUGH DISAFFECTION TO THE SECOND COMING.

It may here be useful for the purpose of deeply impressing on the reader the frequency with which the Second Coming is spoken of in Scripture, to enter briefly into a review of forty or fifty passages wherein the subject is referred to. We do not at present take up or try to enumerate the immense list of passages where this event is spoken of so plainly that no one has failed to acknowledge it. But we wish to draw attention to another class of passages where the reference as truly exists, though it has been little considered. The reader will thus see how much is lost in the way of a true understanding of the Bible by those who do not feel inclined to give the Second Coming the prominence it ought to possess. For, "this doctrine runs like a vein from Genesis to Revelation." *

* *Cox* on "The Coming and Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is all the more necessary and important to set these places before the reader, because we truly believe that an *Antimillennarian*, provided only he loves the Lord's appearing, can enter into their real and proper reference as well as the *Millennarian*. They have been misapplied, we believe, not from dislike to Millennarianism, but from lukewarmness towards the Lord's Coming itself. We say expressly that the class of passages which we mean to notice briefly, is not such as should create the slightest difference between a person who looks for Christ's Coming *after* the Millennium and another who is expecting it *before* that period, provided only both are equally filled with love and desire in regard to the great event itself. The passages we quote have no element of *time* expressed in them. We adduce them to show how inattention to this great subject spreads a mist over many portions of the word.

We begin with Gen. iii. 15, the first promise of the Saviour. Why should we not understand the clause, "*It shall bruise thy head,*" as *fully* accomplished only at the Lord's appearing in glory? On the cross, at this First Coming, Satan was overthrown and virtually destroyed; * but it is at his

* So firmly do we believe this, that we apply Psalm xviii. 6—16, mainly to that defeat of Satan. Christ had cried in this sore battle, "My God, my God!" The Father heard his voice and arose. On earth (ver. 7) the stroke on Satan and his legions (who are meant ver. 4 by

Second that he receives his last blow. The mangled, bruised body of the great serpent (so to speak) shall then be once more openly trampled on, ere it be cast for ever from earth into the lake of fire. How majestic in its range is this brief prediction ! From the beginning of earth's misery, it looks onward to the accomplishment of earth's blessed restoration. The one end of this rainbow-promise dips down on Paradise lost, the other is seen dipping into Paradise restored.

"floods of Belial") was felt in the earthquake. (Matthew xxvii. 51.) But in the unseen world, to which his disembodied spirit was departing, there was one more awful scene. Smoke and fire from the midst of it; darkness and God's brightness bursting out of it; heat and celd, hailstones and coals of fire, weapons of opposite nature; and the symbol of *the cherub* in the midst of all, intimating that this was a *redemption-scene*—all this was exhibited in tremendous majesty. In the midst of this, ver. 14, the arrows of God, and his lightnings, discomfited the legions of Belial; and this was done by the blast of the Lord's nostrils so overwhelmingly that it seemed as if earth's foundations were torn up in the tempest of wrath. *Our world* was the spot round which the battle raged, because there Jesus was bowing his head. And at the moment when He said, "*It is finished*," every foe fled. "He sent from above; he took me; he drew me out of many waters." (Ver. 16.) Ascension followed (ver. 19); and the spreading out of the magnified and honoured law (ver. 20—27). Thereafter we see the conqueror's full equipment (28—36), and his Second Coming (ver. 37—43). Earth is subdued (43—46); and the Lord alone exalted in that day by Jew and Gentile (47—50).

Enoch's prophecy meets us next, though recorded in Jude 14. The first promise spoke of the Lord's coming in grace ; this may be regarded as the second promise, and it speaks of Him coming in glory. We might have thought that the apostle's application of the patriarch's words had set at rest all difference of opinion as to the event referred to. But it is otherwise. Some have not perceived that *the occasion whereon a prophecy was given*, is a different matter from the event intended to be set before us in the prophecy. *The occasion suggests the suitability of taking up that other subject.* As in the Psalms ; such as the xviiith Psalm. The occasion was David's deliverance from Saul and all his foes : but Heb. ii. 13, and Rom. xv. 9, expressly say, it was *Christ's* deliverance that was designed to be sung. It is God's way, to take occasion of the night's darkness to send us songs. Overlooking this most natural circumstance of *suitable occasions*, some have said, that Enoch's prophecy had immediate respect to the approaching destruction of the world by the Deluge ; and President Edwards says, " It does not seem confined to any particular coming of Christ, but is fulfilled, in a degree, in both his First and Second Coming." Surely, it is too express to refer to more than the one great event ; Jude's words are too plain to leave us in doubt. " And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, *pro-*

phesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints," &c. ; or, as he probably sang it on his prophetic harp,—

“ Behold, the Lord has come (ἦλθεν),
 With his ten thousand holy ones,
 To execute judgment upon all ;
 And to convince all their ungodly ones
 Of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly
 committed,
 And of all their hard speeches which they have
 spoken against Him.
 Ungodly sinners ! ”

Jacob's ladder (Gen. xxviii. 12) stretches from the First to the Second Coming. It speaks first of a redeeming God, in mere grace opening up communication with such a base sinner as Jacob then was. It speaks of God having a way to us, and of us sinners having a way to God. But it does more. It indicates a time when earth at large shall have heaven opened over it. Jacob is but a sample.

It is thought by some commentators that, in Numb. xxiii. 10, there is a reference to the *resurrection*. “ Let me die *the death* of the righteous, and let my *latter end* be like his.” The Hebrew word is the same used in Ps. xxxvii. 37, “ *The end* of that man is peace : ” and ver. 38, “ *The end* of the wicked shall be cut off.” And if so, Balaam's words would point to the same happy day as Dan. xii. 13, when the righteous stand in their lot and

enjoy their reward, and his wish would be fuller and more comprehensive than we generally consider it.

In 1 Sam. ii. 10, the name "*Messiah*" occurs for the first time. "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall He thunder upon them. The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth; and He shall give strength unto *his King*, and exalt the horn of *his Anointed*." (vv. 10, 11.) This occurs in Hannah's song. The Holy Spirit puts into her lips a song of grace and glory. Hannah's own case suggested both themes; but her case was only the *occasion* of these themes being taken. She is but the harp on whose strings the Holy Ghost breathes, and forthwith we hear the *grace of God* in bringing salvation to the chief of sinners (2—9); and then the *glorious appearing of the Lord*, when He judges earth and causes every knee to bow to his Anointed One, though now they may despise that grace.

The sweet singer of Israel followed soon; and his latest song, as well as his lifetime's psalms, spoke of "the Just One," who was to rule over men, "the sun of a morning without clouds." See 2 Sam. xxiv. 4.

We pass on to Job xiv. 12—14. Notwithstanding the context being so very clear in its reference to the Resurrection-morning, many have applied ver. 14 to *death*; "I will wait till *my*

change come." But it is obviously far more natural, while it yields, at the same time, a richer meaning, to understand "*the change*" here as referring to *resurrection*. It is not that sad change which is made by the approach of death and decay, when the countenance of the man becomes the prey of corruption ; but is that change which the blessed dead shall undergo at the morning of the Resurrection, when they arise in glory. It is not *death*, but *life* that is the change ; for it takes place when these old heavens are no more (ver. 12), and after the sufferer's body has been laid in the grave, and his soul been "in secret," i.e., in the place of the disembodied spirits. (Ver. 13.) And had not Paul this expression of Job in his thoughts when he wrote, 1 Cor. xv. 51, "We shall all be changed?" and Philip. iii. 21, "He shall change our vile body?"

We need not advert to Job xix. 25, for it is too plain to be mistaken. There we see the two wings outspread, on which a believer soars above earth,—the Lord's grace and glory, his First and Second Coming.

Few have doubted that Psalm xvii. 15, is spoken of the Resurrection morning : "As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness ; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." But many limit Psalm xxiv. 7—10, to the ascension of our

Lord, instead of observing that it points to a time when *earth* (vers. 1, 2) is his in *possession*, as it is now by claim of right. "The King of Glory" comes to take earth as his heritage; this is the theme. At his Ascension he did virtually obtain his heritage; but He did not enter on its possession. But in this psalm He is seen coming to pitch his tabernacle with men. This is the sanctuary whose everlasting gates open to receive their King.* A similar remark may be made on Psalm xlvii. 5, "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." It appears from vers. 8, 9, when "the heathen" and "the people of the God of Abraham gathered together" are spoken of, and also "the shields of *the earth*," that the Psalmist has his prophetic eye on a scene connected not with heaven, but with our world. He sings of the Second Coming of the Lord. He sings of the day of his coronation. He sings of his *ascending his throne*; and as he sees the Son of Man take his place there, he cries regarding the glorious Immanuel,—

* Dr. Candlish, in chapter iv. of "Contributions toward Exposition of Genesis," incidentally quotes this Psalm, and understands it in the same way. He speaks of "earth formally summoned to open her gates," and then the Conqueror enters, with his company of risen saints, "to take possession of his ransomed and recovered earth."

“ *God* is gone up with a shout !
Jehovah with sound of a trumpet !
 Sing praises to God, sing praises ;
 Sing praises unto *our King*, sing praises.
 For God is the king of *all the earth* ! ”

It may be quite appropriate to use the language of Psalm xlv. 3—5, when longing for the extension of his kingly sway over souls. We may thus use it in our congregations, when anxiously desiring to see arrows of conviction shot into their souls. Still, the full and proper sense of the psalm is only to be found in the *Second Coming* of the Lord. It is then He appears in glory, and every knee bows to Him, and every tongue confesses—

“ Thou art fairer than the children of men.”

It is then He girds on his sword, and acts as Messiah. (Vers. 3—5.) It is then He sits down visibly on his throne, and all creation sings—

“ Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,” &c.

In Psalm lxxxix. 51, we find another reference, “ Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants, how I bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people ; wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O Lord, wherewith they have reproached *the footsteps of thine Anointed.* ” The scoffers of those days no doubt said, “ Where is the promise of his Coming ? ” and it may be to this that allusion is made. They said, that if He were coming, his

steps were very slow. If, indeed, the words be referred to his First Coming, they present an interesting analogy. These scoffers using the same taunt as will the scoffers of the last days in regard to his Second Coming. But, as it is to his Coming to repair the wastes and broken-down vineyard of Israel that reference is made, the application is more properly made to his Second Coming; and the passage will be parallel to 2 Peter iii. 2.

We learn from Heb. i. 6, that Psalm xcvi. describes his appearing in glory. But we pass on to remark upon the closing verses of Psalms xcvi. (10—13) and xcvi. (6—9). The joy of that day of God is the theme of these verses. Heaven, earth, and sea rejoice; fields, floods, woods, hills, clap hands, as did the people on Jehoash's coronation-day. (2 Kings xi. 12.) It is not because an heir to the throne is born,—he was born at Bethlehem long ago; but because the Heir of all things at length has come “to judge the earth.” There are hidden springs of gladness to be opened up to us then, and hence a rejoicing world is represented as clapping its hands, and rejoicing before the Lord, the King.

Some writers have not failed to see in Psalm ciii. a beautiful reference to the same subject. The psalm is the song of a redeemed soul, or of the Redeemer himself over his redeemed. All blessings

to sinners are traced to their fountain-head in God, and to his *forgiveness* as the first discovery of his grace. Other blessings follow ; and then, in ver. 8, the Psalmist again returns to the Fountain-head. Him he celebrates : how in his love there is no upbraiding (ver. 9) ; how it is love undeserved (ver. 10) ; love infinitely great (ver. 11) ; thorough-going love (ver. 12) ; yet very tender (ver. 13) ; very sympathizing (ver. 13) ; undecaying (15—17). And how, at length, this river reaches its ocean, —this love ends in bringing its objects to a kingdom (18, 19). And this kingdom is over all. The mention of it is the signal for a burst of rapturous adoration, with which the psalm concludes.

It is to the same period that Psalm civ. refers. It sings of creation as it was ; but it ends with the new Creation, when “sinners are consumed out of the earth.”*

Psalm cxlv. 11, 12, 13, is a psalm for that day when the kingdom comes, and the King reigns in glory far surpassing what the inspired pen has said of an earthly monarch in Esther i. 4. And Psalm cxlix. celebrates the King coming with his attendant hosts. The time is the

* For a most beautiful glance at the contents of this civth Psalm, see Dr. Candlish's “Contributions to Exposition of Genesis,” chapter iii., which he ends with the words, “Such is the certainty of this renewal of the earth.”

hour when He shall judge the earth. It is then "He binds their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written."

There is a passage in Proverbs ii. 21, 22, worthy of attention in this connexion. "The upright shall dwell in the land (earth), and the perfect shall remain in it; but the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it." It closely resembles Psalm xxxvii. 11. "But the meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Many who deny the *Premillennial* Coming and Reign fully admit that, when Christ does come, this earth shall become the very centre of his kingdom; and that to this allusion is made in such passages as the one before us. We think it is the plain and only meaning. To say that saints already possess the earth because they have the promise of daily bread, and as much as is good for their souls,—to say that this is "inheriting the earth," is not interpreting Scripture, but explaining it away. As Christ was *heir* of earth, though "He had not where to lay his head," so are the poorest of saints. But this was a very different thing from entering on possession of his heritage. As Abraham, "the heir of the world," (Rom. iv. 13,) gets his heritage not when a stranger in the land, but at the day when he sees himself ruling all the earth in Christ his seed; so with all

believers at the day of the Lord's coming. It is not Millennarians alone that expect this ; many who are decided Antimillennarians are fully as decided in this expectation.* Mr. Brown quotes some such, and argues for it himself against the idea that such a belief tends to carnalize, or at least lower, our views of the celestial state. "May there not be," says he, p. 18, "in this sensitiveness, some tincture of that *morbid spiritualism* which shrinks from the very touch of materialism, as if separation from it in every form would be the consummation of happiness ? May not the *Gnostic* element—of the essential sinfulness and vanity of matter—be found lurking beneath it ?" And then he thus advances in this reasoning. "If it be no degradation to the Son of God to take the dust of this earth into his own Person, as the 'first-born from the dead'—if the dust of this ground is capable of becoming a 'spiritual and a glorious body,' meet vehicle for the perfected and beatified spirit, the sharer of its bliss in the immediate presence, and the instrument of all its activities in the service of God and the Lamb—it does seem hard to conceive how the very system

* Some Antimillennarians used to be so opposed even to this view, that they could write that "if this view were true, it would be our clear and unquestionable duty to set our affections on things on earth." (Hamilton against Millenarianism, page 171.)

which has furnished all these elements of incorruption, and spirituality, and beauty, and glory, when its present constitution shall be dissolved, and when new and higher laws shall be stamped upon it, should be incapable of furnishing a congenial abode for the glorified Church. Nor is it easy to make anything else out of Peter's celebrated third chapter—on a fair exegetical view of it—than that 'the new heavens and the new earth,' physically considered, will be the same which God originally created for the abode of men, when it shall have undergone an igneous, as it has already undergone an aqueous, transformation." (Page 19.) And lest any one should cut short these remarks by asking, "Of what consequence is it whether the one opinion or the other be the correct one?" we subjoin his reply to such objectors—" *If this be what the Spirit has seen fit so specifically to reveal, it must be worthy of being held fast by us* ; and whatever view we take of it will necessarily give its hue to all other statements of Scripture regarding the *earth*."

We claim, then, such passages as Prov. ii. 21, Psalm xxxvii. 11, and our Lord's reference to both, Matthew v. 9, "*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*," as pointing forward to the day of Christ when the Lamb takes possession of the purchased possession. And now we proceed to other passages which have been often misunderstood

through a misapplication similar to that which has befallen those just quoted.

In Song ii. 8—13, we are not inclined to refuse the use of words so precious to any visit which Christ pays to the soul. For every visit of Christ has in it more or less of that holy joy and that dawning of glory, and those foretastes of bliss, which shall be fully known at the Lord's coming. Even as the Lord's table has its foretastes of glory, and is a shadow of a better feast, so are these visits of Christ to the soul. But still the full meaning is found only by observing that the verses are properly an anticipation of that day when the Bride and Bridegroom meet for ever—for then is "the winter past, the rain over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds is come." It is in prospect of this time that it is said, vers. 16, 17, "He feedeth among the lilies until the day break, and the shadows flee away ;" and in the brightening hope of it the cry ascends, "Turn, my beloved, and be thou like the roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether."

The context in Song iv. 6 leads us to an interesting view of the mind of Christ. It is *He* that speaks, saying, "Until the day break and the shadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense." The Lord

Jesus longs for the day of his coming again, for it is the time of his marriage-supper ; a day of joy unspeakable to Him and to His own—to Him, because of them ; and to them, because of Him. It is then that He shall reveal what “eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived.” Meanwhile, till the hour arrives when He is to open these treasures of glory, he sits at the right hand of the Father. This is “the mountain of myrrh and hill of frankincense ;” for the figure is taken from the use of myrrh and frankincense in the tabernacle and temple service. (See Exodus xxx. 23, 34.) These sweet odours denoted *acceptance*, breathing forth what was pleasing,—*well-pleasing* to all that felt the fragrance. Now Christ at the right hand of God sits in full acceptance, ever well-pleasing to the Father. There and thus he sits till the day break. His saints that die are watched over by Him ; and the soul of each ascends to Him ; and rests somewhere on the slopes of this blessed “mountain of myrrh and hill of frankincense ;” so that there is on it beside Him an innumerable multitude, all waiting with Him for the great day. He and they agree in this “looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God.”

We should not have quoted Isaiah ii. 12—21 were it not that these Old Testament passages when “*The day of the Lord*” occurs, require a remark.

The expression means, the season when the Lord brings on what he had spoken. In all of them, we do not hesitate to say, there is a glance at the future day of Christ's Coming ; the prophet writes, so to speak, under the awful impression of that future day. Yet for all this, the words in themselves are not meant to be confined to that one period. Only let it be observed that they often speak of a *long season*, just as does "*the time of visitation*" in Luke xix. 44. We would not draw from this expression any inference whatever as to *the time* of the Second Coming ; for the expression refers often to previous strokes. But we advert to the expression in connexion with the subject of the Lord's Coming, because it shews us decidedly that the idea of "*the day of judgment*" being a short period of four-and-twenty hours is altogether out of the question. It leads us to the belief that the time called "*the day,*" by our Lord, viz., his Second Coming, is not to be supposed to be a few rapidly-passing moments or hours, but may be a long period of many, many years ; it may be of a thousand.

"*That day,*" however, and "*The day of the Lord,*" may mean the time of the Lord's Second Coming, if the context so determine. And it does so mean in chap. xxv. 6—9. Many quote these words as if they had no reference to anything but the Lord's feast at this First Coming, the Gospel

feast. But the context leads us to see, that the *Marriage Supper* of the Lamb is the true subject. For it is the day when "death is swallowed up in victory (ver. 8), and all tears wiped away ; it is the day when He appears to "them that look for Him," for they say, "Lo ! this is our God, we have waited for Him." And if some feel reluctant to give up their application of ver. 6 to the *Gospel-feast*, we would call their attention to this, that *He* who is the *Gospel-feast*, is also the *feast of that day*. The feast is one of which *that Person* is in either case the substance ; only it is *that Person* under different aspects. It is, however, *Christ himself* that is the true feast, whether now or then.

The true rendering of chap. xxvi. 19, gives us a beautiful glance at the resurrection morning.

"Thy dead shall live; my dead body, they shall arise!
Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is
as the dew of herbs."

This is followed up by the call, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, until the indignation be overpast. For behold ! the Lord cometh out of his place !" And in the same day he slays "the serpent." (Chap. xxvii. 1.)

We have a terrible view of the Second Coming in chap. xxx. 27, "Behold ! the name of the Lord cometh," &c. Combined with the sweet assurance of joy to his own, "Ye shall have a song." (Ver. 29.)

In chap. xxxv. is it not the *New Earth* that is described? Whether before or after the thousand years, is not this earth become Paradise again? "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. . . . No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon: it shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away!"

Let us notice chap. lxiii. 1, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?" There is now no doubt that it is the Second Coming that is meant. Horsley, Lowth, and the best critics all agree in this. It is a description parallel to Revelation xix. 12—15, an awfully majestic portraiture of the great day when the Lord shall come again. It proceeds by way of dialogue. It is as if the Bride in the Song who saw him come up from the wilderness (iii. 6) now saw him returning as the Lion of Judah from the prey. He replies to the inquiry, and then tells with rapturous joy that at length the day-break is arrived; "*The day of my redeemed is come!*" *

* *Samuel Rutherford*, in one of his letters (47), when telling that the enemies of the Son of God shall be fed with their

Many have found a concise summary of our world's revolutions, the endless rising and falling of its empires and thrones depicted in Ezekiel xxi. 25—27, carrying us on to the day of Christ, "Overturn, overturn, overturn, till He come whose right it is." The diadem and the crown shall then be put on Him who has the name "King of kings and Lord of lords."

Perhaps Hosea x. 8 is a glance cast onward to that great day. "The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed; the thorn and the thistle shall come up upon their altars." One part is fulfilled at this hour; the thorns of the land are there. But the idolaters themselves, where are they? They felt the terrors of the Lord on the day when their ruin came; but still they are in reserve for a more terrible sentence. They are to be brought forth yet with the multitude that shall stand before the great white throne, and "*shall say to the mountains, Cover us! and to the hills, Fall on us!*"

own flesh, writes, "*Until the number of the elect be fulfilled, Christ's garments must be rolled in blood. He cometh from Edom, from the slaughter of his enemies, 'clothed with dyed garments, glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength.' Who is this (saith he) that appears in this glorious posture? Our great He—that He who is mighty to save, whose glory shineth while he sprinkleth the blood of his adversaries, and staineth all his raiment. The glory of his righteous revenge shineth forth in these stains.*"

No doubt, Micah, in chap. i. 3, 4, has his eye on that day. While He tells of judgments at the door, he introduces them, by speaking of the Lord, as he who, when he treads on the high places of earth, "the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys cleft, as wax before the fire, and as waters poured down a steep place." And no doubt Habakkuk iii. describes the majesty of the Lord, as that day shall declare it.

But we pass from the Old Testament to some interesting portions of the New, that are often misapplied. We are afraid that few who are not Millennarians will consent to understand our Lord in Matthew xvi. 28, as speaking of this Second Coming. Yet why is this? Do the words not point to that time? "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." Why may not an Antimillennarian admit that the Lord referred to His Second Coming? Did not the Transfiguration scene explain his meaning? Was not that the specimen of the Son of Man coming in his kingdom that was intended in these words? Does not Peter say so in his First Epistle (i. 16, 17), "We made known to you the *power and Coming* of the Lord Jesus;" and then refer to the Transfiguration as a proof and specimen of it?

Those who admit that the new earth is the dwelling of the saints, can find no difficulty (whether they be Millennarians or Antimillennarians), in receiving that rendering of Matthew xix. 28, which is adopted by the best critics, and is almost universally approved of now. "Ye which have followed me, *in the regeneration* (i.e. the renewal of all things) *when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory*, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Reward is promised then to those who follow the Lord now; and that reward is a place in his glorious dominion when all things are made new, when "the meek inherit the earth." Milton ("Paradise Lost," b. xi.) refers to this,

"Waked in the renovation of the Just."

Very few ever doubted that it was to the day of his own appearing that the Lord directed us in Mark xiii. 32—35. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is." And few can hesitate to admit that it is not to the New Testament economy, but to the still future time of His glorious Coming that he refers in chap. xiv. 25, "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until

I drink it *new in the kingdom of God.*" And in Luke xxii. 16, and elsewhere, these words surely mean the eternal kingdom.

And is it not the same that is meant in Luke vii. 28, "*He that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he?*" John the Baptist was greater than all preceding prophets ; and is he not far greater than the greatest saint of our days ? If so, then these words do not speak of the New Testament economy ; they do not say that John is excelled in knowledge or grace by a babe under the present economy. No ; who can read the Baptist's solemn, full, clear, free setting forth of the Saviour in John iii. 27—36, without feeling that he saw far indeed into Gospel mysteries ? The Trinity, faith, the fulness of Christ, the freeness of salvation, seem as thoroughly understood by him as by Paul. If so, the words of our Lord regarding John must mean, that great as he was in point of knowledge, holiness, honour, and privileges, still the very least saint who should actually inherit the promised kingdom, should be found far greater than he had been in the days of his testimony. It is our Lord's way of applying his subject practically. Having been speaking of John, He now says, by way of application to the people, "Great as he is, you may be greater still : for all who shall be with me in my

kingdom know me, and are more exalted far than John is now."

There is a beautiful passage in John i. 51, the force of which has often been obscured by misinterpretation. It is Christ's words to Nathaniel; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, *Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.*" Nathaniel (already a true believer, for he was a *guileless* man, and it is *pardon* which brings *guilelessness* into the soul, Ps. xxxii. 2) had seen his Lord for the first time; and, at this first interview, had been led to own Him *God-man*. For he owned Him "*Son of God*," which was a full confession of his being of the same Divine nature as the Father; and "*King of Israel*," which was equivalent to admitting Him to be David's son, the seed promised to Abraham. As he thus reposed his soul on Immanuel, and felt the sweetness of knowing Him in whom he believed, Jesus spoke again, and promised greater things. It was as if he said, "All ye (for it is *ὑμεῖς*) who have confessed me in my humiliation, shall yet see me in my glory. Ye have received me at my First Coming, and hereafter, at my Second, ye shall see heaven *set open* (*ἀνεκκρυφτα*) over earth, and the Son of Man encompassed with the angels of God, some coming down to receive orders

from their King, some going upward to execute their commissions." He speaks of the future glory, not of any visits He was to have of angels while in his low estate ; for of these what eye was witness ? If it be said, that the language resembles Genesis xxviii. 12, still this does not at all alter the sense. If *Jacob's ladder* be hinted at, then it would seem to cast light on Jacob's ladder ; it would seem to intimate that that vision shall be fulfilled, in all its meaning, not simply by God uniting himself to man's nature, but by God-man making earth the metropolis of his universe. That earth on which God shed his blood is to be for ever renowned, and for ever linked to heaven. *Witsius* has a dissertation on this verse,* wherein he admits at the close that, after all, it is very probable our Lord had in his mind Dan. vii. 13, 14, where Messiah is seen as Son of Man, and receives a kingdom and dominion.

In our Lord's discourses in John xiv. and xvi. He speaks of coming to them again, after his departure. In this He speaks of his Second Coming ; for in xvi. 21, 22, He defines it to be a coming when they should have joy that would never be removed ; and a day when they should no longer put questions to Him (ver. 23, οὐκ ἐρωτῆστέ), a thing which they continued to do till his Ascension

* " Ad Joh. i. 50, 51, de cœlo aperto, et angelis Dei ascendentibus et descendentibus super Filium Hominis."

(see Acts i. 6) ; and to take place after He himself had gone to the Father and been accepted.

* Nor is it unimportant to notice the full sense of John xvii. 20—22. Jesus prays for all that *are to believe*, and that all *these* may be one. Many quote these verses to prove the *duty* of unity among Christians ; but it ought to be quoted as showing the *privilege* of entire unity that *they shall yet enjoy*. He speaks not of a union among saints while in this scene of warfare, but of the union of the scattered family at his Coming. For he says, “ And *the glory* which thou gavest me I have given them, that *they may be one, even as we are one.*” We are bound by every consideration of love to our brother, and gratitude to our Lord, to strive for unity ; but the prayer here is for that other, and more complete unity which shall be realized at the Lord’s Coming, when the Head of the family arrives.

There is one other passage in John deserving of notice here, namely, xxi. 23, “ If I will that he *tarry till I come*, what is that to thee ?” Our Lord’s words convey this sense,—“ Were it my will, John might continue on earth without tasting death

* Some writers are fond of explaining “ the Lord’s Coming ” as meaning “ death.” An American writer in the *Biblic. Repos.* for July, 1846, says, on Philip. i. 6, “ The expression is, perhaps, equivalent to the more modern phrase, ‘ *Till death.*’ ”

until I come again the second time : but what is that to thee ? Follow thou me." It is strange that any should have thought he referred to John's remaining in life till the destruction of Jerusalem ! That thought never crossed the disciples' mind. On the contrary, the ten disciples said among themselves, " Ah ! our Master means to save this beloved disciple from the pang of dying." The saying went abroad, that he was not to die at all ; and the origin of this report was their understanding Christ to say, " John shall tarry till I come again in glory ;" they overlooked the clause, "*If I will*," and took the saying as an absolute promise. John himself understood the words thus ; for he points out where the mistake of his brethren lay. " It was," says he, " in overlooking the clause, '*If I will*.'" They would have been right, but for that clause. But for that clause, John would have had a promise of not dying. The Lord, however, beautifully declined to reveal anything whatever of his purposes as to his beloved disciple. He says to this effect ; " If it were my will that he who has so often leant on my bosom at my First Coming, were to be carried up, like Enoch or Elijah, at my Coming again, without having ever tasted death, what is that to thee ?" No doubt our Master, in the very terms in which he puts his supposition, intended to suggest to us that his Coming again is

the real solution of our anxieties. We are to wait till then, in order to see all providences explained.

Romans viii. 19—23 is one of the most sublimely affecting passages regarding our earth ever written. It is not *saints* who are groaning, nor is it the *unconverted world*; but it is this earth, this *creation*, animal and material, represented as waiting for “the manifestation of the sons of God.” Whenever the day of Christ has come, then shall this earth be freed from the curse. Its physical renovation shall then take place, as we find also in Rev. xxi. 1—6. It is in prospect of this that the Psalmist represents fields and floods clapping their hands, and seas roaring, and all the earth exulting “before the Lord, because he cometh, he cometh to judge the earth.” (Psalm xcvi.)

John Bradford, the martyr, has a letter to a friend on this passage, (Letter 83,) wherein he tells, not only his own thoughts on it, but those also of his father in the Lord, *Martin Bucer*. All things created, he says, “have a certain compassion with man, (i. e., common feeling,) and, after their kind, look for deliverance from vanity, which they shall obtain in their restoration. I therefore told you that I take the apostle to mean by ‘every creature,’ simply, *even all the whole shape and creatures in the world*. He attributes unto them

that they look for the perfection of our salvation attributing these things to the senseless creature by translation from man, to signify the society, cognation, and consent, which all and every creature hath with man; that as every thing and all things were made for man, so by the man Christ, all and every thing, both earthly and heavenly, shall be restored." He then adds, "These things will I think upon; these things will I pause upon; herein will I, as it were, drown myself, being careless of this point, I mean as to what parts of the world the Lord Christ will restore unto me, or how he will do it, or what state or condition he will give it. It is enough, and enough for me, that I and all the world like me shall be much more happy than now I can by any means conceive."

Paul delights to refer to his Lord's appearing. We could not easily quote all his allusions to that day. Let us, however, notice some few of the less evident references. He speaks of our adoption as incomplete till resurrection come, for it is only then we are fully adopted as *men*, body as well as soul. It is this day of Christ he means in Rom. xiii. 12, "*The night is far spent, the day is at hand.*" It is to this period he points us 1 Cor. vi. 2, "*Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?*" He groans in spirit at the thought of it

in 2 Cor. v. 4, not seeking *death*, but seeking the *resurrection, life, and glory*; "*not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*" This he means in Ephes. iv. 13, "*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*" Even when thinking of his death, his eye stretches over the intervening space and rests on the day-break at the Lord's coming, 2 Tim. iv. 8. It is in all probability of the new earth that he speaks in Hebrews ii. 5, "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the *world to come*, whereof we speak." This, too, is meant in chap. xii. 26, 27, 28. "Yet once more, (viz., at the Lord's coming,) I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." And then cometh, "The kingdom which cannot be moved."

The apostles James and Peter abound in references to it; but these references are quite obvious. We close, therefore, all our remarks on these passages, by noticing Rev. v. 10, where even the happy redeemed in glory are singing, "*We shall reign upon the earth*;" and Rev. xxii. 17, which tells us the cry of the Spirit and the bride. And this latter passage is worth comparing with Matt. xxv. 6, "At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him."

Who raises this cry? It is not the virgins, for the cry reaches their ears and awakens them. Is it not raised by the *Holy Spirit* in the Church below, even as Rev. xxii. 17 represents Him raising it in the Church above? Blessed Spirit! thou honourest the beloved Son! thou glorifiest Him! And fain wouldst thou have us to honour and glorify Him as thou dost! O that we were thus wholly his—wholly satisfied in Him—and longing for his appearing. Already we are justified, and may in *this respect* say, "*As He is, so are we*" (1 John iv. 17); being clothed in his robe; but we groan within ourselves for likeness to Him in character and feeling, knowing that yet we shall be "*like Him when we see Him as He is.*" (1 John iii. 2.) In these present days, raise in us that cry which indicates how we love the Lord! If midnight be now come, or be even near, oh, give us this spirit of holy expectation for the Bridegroom! *The lamp* declares that we profess to honour the Bridegroom by joining his procession at his coming. Lord, let it be a reality with us! "Let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober."

CHAPTER V.

PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION.

IN "Butler's Analogy," (P. ii. c. 3,) there is a passage to this effect : "It is not at all incredible that a book which has been so long in possession of mankind should contain many truths as yet undiscovered. For all the same phenomena and the same faculties of investigation from which such discoveries have been made in natural knowledge, in the present and last age, were equally in the possession of mankind several thousand years before. And possibly it might be intended that events as they came to pass should open and ascertain the meaning of several parts of Scripture."

We quote the above passage with the view of suggesting a satisfying consideration to those who are ready to say to us, "How was not this view seen and brought forward by all the masters in Israel who searched into the Scriptures in former days ?" The truth was there ; but the circumstances in which they were placed did not lead many of them to investigate it. It is even as with the question

of the "eternal Sonship." That truth lies in the Word ; but until circumstances led to examination the proofs of it were not seen in their clearness.

We have another reason for quoting the above remark of Butler. He says that, in regard to natural science, the very same persons who failed to make the discoveries since made, had, nevertheless, all the phenomena before them, and had also the same faculties of investigation. We say this even more fully in regard to the case before us. For we proceed to show that the *same principles* which have led so very many to point out the literal fulfilment of past prophecies, are the principles which the class of Millennialians with whom we wish to be identified maintain and act upon. There are other Millennialians who broadly maintain principles of literal interpretation of such a kind as we would by no means agree with. We are content to hold no other principles than those that guided *Bishop Newton* or *Dr. Keith* in their investigations. Our principle is this : LET UNFULFILLED PROPHECY BE INTERPRETED WITH THE SAME LITERALITY, AND NO MORE, THAT WE FIND BORNE OUT BY FULFILLED PROPHECY. We wholly differ from those who are usually called *spiritualizers* of prophecy. But we state distinctly that, as for us, our principles are the very same as those of *Dr.*

Keith in his work on fulfilled prophecy ; and what principles could be safer, since they have all the authority that unquestioned verification can give them ? If some Millennarians have sometimes maintained that their principles were quite different from others who spiritualized the prophecies, we, for our part, wish it distinctly understood that *Dr. Keith's "Fulfilled Prophecy"* is all we wish for as an illustration of ours. What we complain of in many is not their principle, but their departure from it. It is, for example, in such instances as Isaiah xxxii. 12—15 that we often differ from such in the *application* of their principle. For some will unhesitatingly point out there how Israel has "*lamented for the teats,*" i.e., the *uber terræ*, the fruitful soil, "*for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine,*" for the soil is under a curse, such fields as the plain of Esdraelon lie waste, and the vines are swept away from the terraced hills. They will point out the fulfilment of the words, "*Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers ; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city.*" They will tell here of the hills and plains of Judah and Israel covered with thistles and briers, and of cities such as Cæsarea and Gherash, overspread with the same. They will go on and read, "*Because the palaces shall be forsaken, the multitude of the city shall be left ; the forts and towers shall be for dens for ever,*

a joy of wild asses, a pasture of flocks ; until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high." And this they will shew has been fulfilled to the letter, inasmuch as no palace, at least, nothing of any palace but broken fragments, can be found in Judah or Jerusalem, while "forts and towers" on the coast and beyond Jordan are frequented by flocks at night, and the wild ass has been seen by travellers to sport among their ruins. All this has been and shall continue, "*until the Spirit be poured upon us.*" But now the difference arises. We go on to say that ver. 15 means of course the reversing of ver. 13, "*The wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and what was once reckoned a fruitful field is little thought of now, because of the immense luxuriance ;*" for the curse is removed. But at this point many part company with us and say, "No ; this is a spiritual blessing, and the *wilderness* means the *moral waste.*" On the other hand, we see no reason for such a change of meaning ; for we find *the moral and spiritual blessing* in the "*outpoured Spirit*" of ver. 15, and the "judgment and righteousness" of ver. 16, and the "peace and assurance" of ver. 17, while we take the clauses that speak of *the land* as meaning the land itself.

We give this as a specimen of how it is that differences arise among those who start with the same principle. Neither class maintains that there

is no figurative writing in the prophets ; but the question is, as to the extent to which that figurative language exists. We admit that our Lord used the comparison of "*wolves and sheep*" to mark out persons of certain character ; but when we read Isa. xi. 6, we see nothing in the context requiring us to conclude that the prophet speaks of such persons. We would not say that "*serpents*" must always mean such men as the Pharisees and Sadducees because they are figuratively so called in two places of the New Testament. We retain the literal, unless there is some positive reason existing why we should not. We do not deny that in another connexion such language might be figurative ; but we cannot doubt it is literal when all else around it is so. In Isaiah lxxv. 25, where "*the serpent*" is represented as still "*eating dust*," when other animals are freed from their yoke of "vanity," we keep to the literal, because not only is there no reason for spiritualizing the verse in order to find it edifying, but on the contrary, it is by taking the literal sense that we get edification. There in the serpent eating "dust," we see a monument of Satan's snares set up, during the days he is bound, like the pillar of Lot's wife, in former days. By that simple arrangement, will the Lord keep the blessed people of those Millennial days in mind of their great enemy now in chains, and of the awful

fall ; and thus simply will the Lord sound in their ears, amid their prosperity, " Take heed lest there be in you an evil heart of unbelief."

We differ, then, from many literalists in regard to the application of our rule ; but we have no new set of principles. We reject at once those views that would say of such a passage as Micah v. 5, "*the Assyrian*" is our spiritual foe ; and that v. 6, "*they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword,*" means the ruin of our spiritual foes. Where is there one hint of such a principle in the word of God ? It is right—to do otherwise would be wrong—to stay at such a passage and seek to extract spiritual edification ; but let it be done in a proper manner. Let the man not be lazy and easy-minded in the things of God. Let him not say, " O it will do well to let *the Assyrian* stand as an Algebraic sign for '*our spiritual enemy*.'" Let him rather take the words literally, as referring to some national Jewish event yet future ; and then let him say, " But he who is able to be Israel's peace in that day, may well be mine now ! "

It is a gross mistake regarding our views to suppose that we strip the prophecies of their spiritual use. So far from this we believe that we rescue them from being misapplied, and then find in them "honey from the comb." We do take "*Zion and Jerusalem*" as always referring primarily

to these localities, as names for the place or country where Israel dwelt. But inasmuch as God's true, and only true Church, was there, we hold that oftentimes what was said to "*Zion and Jerusalem*" was said to it as being the *seat of the Church*. Just as we hold that the seven epistles in Rev. ii. and iii. were written literally to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea; while at the same time the things written apply to the Church of God in all ages.

This mode of dealing with the word, always using it in its primary sense first, gives us great advantage. We feel sure that we are *not accommodating, but are actually applying the words of the passage to their proper use*. The Holy Ghost blesses the use of the word in its intended meaning. If we were preaching on Jeremiah xxxiii. 16, we would shrink from saying "Judah and Jerusalem" mean sinners that believe in Christ! We could not thus turn to the Gentiles what the Holy Ghost speaks of Israel. But we would shew that blinded, self-righteous, unbelieving Israel is meant. We would exhibit this glorious Saviour, "*The Lord our Righteousness*," and then shew how certain it is that he can cover with his robe any soul, however stained, however base, however blasphemous it has been, since He there declares that He will do this, even for "*Judah and Jerusalem!*" And so, if we

took up Isa. xliii. 25, "*I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake,*" we would consider ourselves as occupying no ordinary vantage-ground in being able to shew that the Lord said this to *Jerusalem sinners*—to Israel, the most hardened in unbelief and the most self-righteous of all people.

We never doubt but that there may be figurative language used by the prophets in their most literal prophecies, just as our Lord used a figure when he said, "ye generation of vipers," in the midst of His most plain and close address. (Matthew xxiii. 33.) In common life we would listen to a man in ordinary conversation as one who spoke literally ; and if he got animated would not be surprised if he used some glowing metaphor. Yet for all that, the drift of his discourse is plain enough, and his figures do not mislead us as to his literal meaning. It is even so when Isaiah writes, (xxxiv. 5,) "*My sword shall be bathed in heaven ;*" we at once recognise a figure here, and yet this does not prevent us understanding literally the clause that follows, "*it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse to judgment.*" When in Rev. ii. 22, the Lord refers to Jezebel's fornication, and says, "*Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her,*"—we see at once that in the fervour of indignation he means to say, "Since she will have the adulterous bed, I will give her a bed that she

will not relish, viz., 'great tribulation,' she shall lie down in sorrow."

Just because such are our principles we quite agree with Mr. Brown, (page 6,) that "*the day of the Lord*" and "*That Day*," do not necessarily mean in the Old Testament the Second Coming of Christ. These expressions are used continually by the prophets to express *seasons of visitation*. In some instances, the season of visitation which the expression refers to, is the Lord's Second Coming ; but we could not have found out that by the words themselves. It is the context that leads to that conclusion. On the other hand, we as decidedly maintain that we are fixed down in the New Testament to the day of the Second Advent, in all those passages where Christ is spoken of as coming again. These passages are totally different from such passages as Isaiah xix. 1, "*Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt.*" For here the word "*rideth*" hints at once that there is a figure. Instead of Pharaoh's horsemen and chariots, lo ! the Lord who "*rideth upon the swift clouds.*" This irresistible one is He that comes to make Egypt tremble. It is like Psalm xviii. 11. But it is evident that the descriptions of *Jehovah*, the Judge of all, are very different from statements regarding the *Incarnate Son*.*

* Micah i. 3, 4, has been noticed already.

In interpreting the *Lord's Coming* in the New Testament as always referring to that great day of his Advent, we take the most natural and obvious meaning of the words. If the words do not mean this, there must be something in the context that proves they do not; and the *onus probandi* lies with those who refuse to take the apparent sense. Where, then, is the evidence for the *destruction of Jerusalem* ever meaning the *Lord's Coming*? If asked for evidence of the "day of the Lord," meaning a season of visitation, we would point to such a passage as Jer. xlv. 10, where it is written, "This is the day of the Lord of hosts, a day of vengeance . . . for the Lord God of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates." But where is there one such passage that gives a shade of countenance to the "Coming of the Lord," ever meaning the destruction of Jerusalem? To say, as some do, that Matthew xvi. 28, and John xxi. 22, lend countenance to this interpretation, is taking the thing for granted; not proving it. And then to say that such phrases as "*I will come and fight against thee with the sword of my mouth,*" (Rev. ii. 16,) is against our view, is to mistake the force of our argument. For we admit that the expression, "*come to thee and punish thee,*" may mean simply to denote the secret or public providence that chastises an individual. It

is like the phrase, "I will come to do such a thing." But this is not the same as the full and definite phrase, "*The Son of man coming in his kingdom.*"

It has been too much the custom to solve difficulties by saying, "*This may be spiritual in its meaning.*" Now, this mode of interpretation leaves an open door to Neology or Socinianism. We insist that where there is no evidence for the context of any thing but literality being meant, it is an unfair and unwarranted mode of escaping difficulties to say, "This may be spiritualized."

Having stated thus briefly our views as to *literal interpretation* as being just those of Dr. Keith and others, we might say a little as to *double prophecy*. This, however, we need not enter upon to any extent; for it is not a Millennialian principle in itself. Some Millennialians hold it; some Antimillennialians reject it. There is just one feature of it that we are called to remark upon, viz., admitting, as we do, that some predictions were meant to be fulfilled twice, or in two instalments, we hold that we must, in all such cases, look for a literal fulfilment in *both* instalments, or a spiritual in *both*. We are not to take one literal, and the second spiritual; nor one half containing only things spiritual, and the other half things temporal; but both parts must be of the same nature.

To give an instance. We admit that Haggai

ii. 6, 7, may be a double prophecy.* We believe part of it has been fulfilled already. In a certain degree, "*All nations were shaken, and the Desire of all nations came,*" at the Lord's First Appearing. But then ver. 6 remains to be fulfilled ; and we do not say that that verse means kingdoms and powers and dominion, for ver. 7 expresses that idea in the clause, "*I will shake all nations,*"—but we take the whole of ver. 7 literally. The Lord says, "Yet once it is a little while, and I am the shaker of (וְאֶנִּי מַרְדֵּשׁ) the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come." He is yet to shake the heavens and earth and sea. It is to be at the time when Zerubbabel shall receive his reward, vers. 21, 22, 23. Paul says, in reference to that time, "Now hath he promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." (Heb. xii. 26.)† Meanwhile, He did

* Some escape this necessity by understanding "This latter house" to mean, "This house at the last," or, in the last days. In Job xix. 25, אֶתֶּרֶן is so used. If so, the whole is to be fulfilled at the Lord's Second Coming. "The glory of this house in the latter day shall be greater than the glory of this house (הַבַּיִת) at its first day," viz., in Solomon's time.

† Mr. Brown, page 147, says, that this expresses God's intention at the time appointed to do so,—an intention fulfilled at Christ's First Coming. We just ask if the apostle does not say, ver. 26, that it is still an unfulfilled promise?

shake the nations in a certain way by the Roman power, and the Messiah appeared in humiliation. But He will resume the whole of these details, and fulfil thoroughly every part on heaven, earth, sea, dry land, and nations, when the Lord is coming the second time.

We think Malachi iii. 1, 2, quite a similar instance. We insist on consistently carrying out either the literality of the prophecy entire, or the figurativeness. We think it unauthorized and unfair to take such a passage as Matt. xxiv. 29, 30, and say, "This was figuratively and spiritually fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, and its results in the spread of the Gospel; but will be a second time literally fulfilled in the end of the world." We say, where do you find authority for this? Is not this, on the other hand, the obvious and plain interpretation, viz., that, up to ver. 28, the events connected with Jerusalem's destruction have fulfilled the prophecy; but that after that nothing yet has occurred sufficient to exhaust the terms of the Word. At the Lord's Second Coming there may be a sort of resuming the former part of the prediction, e. g., that part which speaks of war, famine,

"Now he has promised." And in belief of this he says, ver. 28, "We receiving a kingdom," i. e., receiving it on that day. Dr. Urwick agrees with us in interpreting "*Yet once more,*" of Christ's Coming.

pestilence; but, at all events, the second instalment of the prophecy begins at ver. 28, and requires as literal a fulfilment as the first received.

We do not think it needful to dwell upon this point farther. Only let us say, that we fear some on both sides are too fond of this theory of *double prophecy*. For our own part, often have we felt that there was much lost by means of the use some have made of it, and often it has been applied too hastily.

Let us give three specimens of what we mean.

1. We take Jeremiah l. and li. as the first specimen. Some say there that the whole is a fine instance of *double prophecy*; Babylon the mystical being pointed at in this detail of the ruin of Babylon literal. Now, we confess we have not much confidence in this view. We are satisfied with taking it as it stands in relation to the first and literal Babylon.

The chapters will then run thus. In chapter l. 1—3, we have the judgment on the *Babylonian* empire announced. Then at ver. 4, "*In those days and at that time*," Israel is represented as coming to the Lord with weeping. That is, during the time of Babylon's desolations, and while she lies in ruins beside her broken idols. Then ver. 8. is a cry to the nations to come and bring on this state of ruin upon Babylon. All at once, after many

verses have carried on this subject, at ver. 17 the sad state of Israel is spoken of ; for ever and anon poor Israel crosses the mind of their compassionate Shepherd. And vers. 19, 20, declare that when Babylon and Assyria are for ever gone, this ancient flock shall return and be saved. Then, returning from this parenthesis, ver. 21 again calls on the nations to come up against his people's oppressors ; and ver. 28 declares, that all this is because of their having meddled with his flock and his temple. At ver. 33 the Lord again interrupts the narrative of judgment to say a kind word to his beloved Israel ; and having said it, resumes at ver. 35 the narrative of wrath upon Chaldea. The rest of this chapter, and four verses of chapter li., are thus occupied ; and then, at ver. 5, once more the kind, loving, yearning voice of Israel's Shepherd is heard, saying, "For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah, of his God, of the Lord of hosts, though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel." An exhortation follows to flee from Babylon ; and Israel is introduced vers. 9, 10, declaring, how their desire to deliver it was vain, and how the Lord wrought righteously in the doom he inflicted. No sooner is this kind word to Israel spoken, than ver. 11 denounces the metropolis of Chaldea again, specially exalting the Lord of hosts in opposition to these his enemies. At ver. 19, and onward to

ver. 24, the Lord exhibits Himself as Jacob's portion, and as the God who will use Jacob to do greater things than Babylon ever wrought with all its might and grandeur. This done, lo ! again the theme of wrath is taken up as far as ver. 35, which once more states, that Babylon's treatment of Zion was one of its chiefest sins ; and what the ruin shall be is told at length to the end of the chapter.

There is no necessity for bringing in *double prophecy*. Many of the things to be done for Israel, as foretold here, are future still ; but then, the occasion of foretelling them was not that these future things had connexion with Babylon, but that Israel was to be comforted by being told how, in after days, the Lord would remember them, while He left Babylon for ever waste. The Lord's peculiar love to Israel runs, like a clear stream, through these remarkable chapters. His sovereign purpose of special favour to this people is contrasted with his awful severity on Babylon. And thus we read the chapter as a display of love and of wrath together. It is for no want of love in his heart that He brings wrath on Chaldea, and it is not from disregard to holiness that He so loves Israel.

It may be true that the *mystic Babylon* shall yet be found to resemble *literal Babylon* in its doom ; and it may be true that Israel's return and prosperity shall be found intimately connected therewith. And if so, many things in these two chapters

will appear remarkably appropriate to the men of those days. Still, this may be, and may have been intended to be, while we are not justified in saying that there is a double prophecy.

2. We are inclined to say the same of Nahum i. As the case quoted shows us *Babylon* in its ruins while Israel arises from the dust, so Nahum shows *Nineveh* left in desolation for ever, while, in the end, Israel emerges from his long degradation. Nahum begins with announcing *God's character*, jealous in his holiness, yet gracious; unsearchable in his ways; almighty, sovereign, irresistible; yet a God of love, and a refuge to those that trust in Him. (1—7.) Then, *Nineveh* is brought before us. "*But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof; and darkness shall pursue his enemies.*" (Ver. 8.) In vers. 9, 10, he paints their vain hopes of escape. In ver. 11 their blasphemy, like Rabshakeh's. In ver. 12, "*though they be quiet,*" prosperous, or unbroken in strength, "*and likewise many, yet thus* (even while in this prosperous state to human eye) *shall they be cut down.*" And forthwith the kind Shepherd of Israel casts his eye on Israel, and assures him that his end shall not be as that of this Assyrian kingdom; "*Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more.*" There is a time coming that brings that calamity to a close. (See Isa. xxvii. 7, 8.) In the thirteenth verse Nahum further promises deliver-

ance from *Nineveh*, while (ver. 14) He turns to that haughty city and says, "*I will make thy grave, for thou art vile.*" That grave has remained unopened for long ages. The city of *Nineveh* has been waste,—left in heaps,—never searched out. But in our day, within these few years, lo! it comes into view. Men are digging open this ancient city, as if to recall it to our mind, in order that the contrast of its continued ruin may, in these last days, be a foil to Israel's returning glory.* Hence, ver. 15 speaks of what is soon to take place in Judah, while still *Nineveh* sleeps in ruin. "*Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows; for the wicked shall no more pass through thee, he is utterly cut off.*"

3. We adduce Isaiah xxxiv. 1—8, as one other instance. The preceding chapter ended with telling of the happy days when "the King is seen in his beauty." The following chapter tells of the same time. Between these two we have this prophecy; the nations are gathered, the sword comes down on Idumea and Bozrah. It is seen on the battlefield of Armageddon. Only let us remember, that that battlefield shall extend from the *plain of Tabor* down to the *valley of Jehoshaphat* (Joel iii.), and

* The desolation of Israel spoken of by those two prophets, runs on from century to century, like "the tribulation" spoken of in Matt. xxiv. 29.

then onward to the *hills of Edom*, and all is easy. The area of that battlefield shall be from *Megiddo*, or the plain of Tabor on the north, to *Idumea* on the south, with the *valley of Jehoshaphat* as its centre. This is the scene of the winepress referred to in Isaiah lxiii. 1—3, and Revelation xiv. 19, 20.* And hence we see how the Conqueror is at one time seen coming from Bozrah, at another, appears in the valley of Jehoshaphat. It will be literally true that day, "The host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens rolled together as a scroll, and the land soaked with blood." And there, in Edom, shall the fire of wrath be seen for ever in some singular form. Meanwhile, the cormorant and the bittern possess it; thorns come up in her palaces; it is a habitation for dragons. This instalment of the Prophetic Word has been already received. The other will come yet. "Seek ye out of the Book of the Lord, and read; no one of these shall fail." It is like the rent altar, 1 Kings xiii. 3, a pledge of more.

However, we merely give these as specimens of what we meant when we said, that some had been too hasty in saying that very many passages admitted of no explanation unless by the key of double prophecy. It is one thing for a passage to be so skilfully constructed that its terms are full of appropriate suggestions which bear on other events, and quite another thing for a passage to be intended

* Dr. Keith suggests this harmonizing of the passages.

to describe more than one special event. Thus, in Rev. v. 5, "*the lion* of the tribe of Judah;" and ver. 6, "*The Lamb*," may suggest most beautifully the two characteristics of our Lord,—his wrath against foes, and his meekness towards friends; but evidently the main idea is his being *Conqueror*, as He had once been the *slain Lamb*. So, Isaiah xxv. 6; "*In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all the people a feast of fat things*," does most beautifully describe the Gospel feast, by way of accommodation; but it is the feast at the Second Coming that is meant. Only, inasmuch as it is *Christ himself* that is the substance of both feasts, the analogy here is more than ordinarily close. For it is Jesus, *seen by faith*, that is the essence of the feast now; it will be Jesus, *seen eye to eye*, that shall form the essence of the feast then.

Our readers will now see our principles. The sum of the whole matter is this,—we take the Prophetic Word as literal, unless reasons to the contrary can be assigned. This is a principle which no man meets with a cry of alarm or scorn in the case of fulfilled prophecy, but which he will gladly follow out in the writings of travellers in Judea or to the Seven Churches. Why, then, should a principle that has facts to uphold it in the past, be regarded otherwise than with the utmost favour when applied to the future?

CHAPTER VI.

LEADING OBJECTIONS. EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE.

ONCE a man of God could venture to write, "A personal Advent of Christ cannot, for a single moment, be entertained by any man who knows the meaning of his Bible, and bows to its sacred and paramount authority."* Few would say so now, even in the heat of controversy. But many children of God see some parts of God's truth much clearer than they do others. And many see only one part of prophetic truth, leaving the rest of it unheeded. Hence, we find some who are altogether ignorant of unfulfilled prophecy, and others who advance a little way into this great field, and then stand still. We know some who admit the Premillennial inference from 2 Thess. ii. to be irresistible, and yet see not the force of any other passages. Others wonder that any doubt as to the First Resurrection, who notwithstanding go no farther. Many believe fully the restoration of the Jews to their own land in the latter days, and their pre-

* Hamilton against Millennarianism, page 228.

eminence as a nation far, far above all other kingdoms, even in a temporal view, who yet are not prepared to admit the Pre-millennial reign. We might quote *Dr. Keith* as one of this class, a distinguished labourer in the prophetic field, and a thorough-going literalist, up to a certain point.* And, indeed, throughout Scotland, few Christians of intelligence are now to be found who doubt the literal restoration, as well as the conversion, of the Jews.

Our reason for pointing out this fact here will appear immediately. People not unfrequently think that they are arguing against Millennarians, when in truth they are pointing their artillery only against some opinion held by Millennarians, in common with all other interpreters of prophecy who believe in the restoration of Israel. Thus, some imagine that they are disproving Millennarianism, when they urge difficulties in the way of the literal fulfilment of such a prophecy as Zechariah xiv. 16 ; “ *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*” But the truth is, that this and similar passages do not belong to the *Millennarian province*, they belong to the province of *Jewish restoration*. Hence, we find not a few who

* See especially his work, “ *The Covenant with Abraham.*”

do not hold the Pre-millennial Advent, explaining and defending the literality of this passage. Dr. Henderson, in his "Commentary on the Minor Prophets," writes, "I cannot but take the meaning to be, that the nations in question will go up to Jerusalem in the person of their representatives, just as in former times the Jews resident in foreign countries had those who went to the annual feasts in their name, or on their behalf." "It is worthy of notice that the Feast of Tabernacles, or Booths, is the only one of all the Jewish festivals which is represented in this prophecy as being observed at the period therein specified." And then he proceeds to give three reasons why that feast should be observed at that time.

We call attention to such a passage as the above, and the comment on it, not with the view, at present, of either proving or disproving the interpretation given by the author quoted, but simply with the view of fixing in the mind of the reader that many difficulties, supposed to belong to the Pre-millennial view, are really difficulties in the way of all who hold the literal return of Israel. And we here take for granted, that there are very few indeed who doubt or deny that event.

We are surprised to find that one so acute as Mr. Brown * has failed to see, that many of his objec-

* In some of his remarks on this head, as well as a few

tions, and of his refutations, do not bear upon Premillennialists, because the things thought to be refuted are really matters belonging to the *Jewish restoration*. We give the following instance. He takes up Acts i. 6, "*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*" (See pp. 263—5.) He speaks throughout, as if to refute the idea of Israel's pre-eminence over the nations in the latter day were to undermine one of the props of the Premillennial view. In reply to which we say, that it bears upon what shall be the state of *Israel as a nation* then, but does not affect the proof of the Premillennial Coming in the slightest degree. But we were more amazed still to find Mr. B. satisfying himself and dazzling his readers by the following refutation of the idea, that "the kingdom to Israel," means more than Church privileges, or saving privileges. He asks, what was the kingdom that was taken from them? And answers by quoting Matt. xxi. 43, "*The kingdom of God shall be taken from you,*" and thereupon infers that it is ridiculous to say, that Acts i. 6, can mean national supremacy. But there is a fallacy in his argument. He changes his terms, unintentionally we believe, but he does change them. Put it thus,

others of a kindred nature, *Dr. Urwick*, of Dublin, has preceded Mr. Brown. See pp. 36—38, and p. 49, of his lectures "*On the Second Advent.*"

"*The kingdom of God*" is said, in Matt. xxi. 43, to be given to the Gentiles ;

Therefore, "*the kingdom which Israel had possessed as a nation,*" was then given away to the Gentiles !

What is there here, we ask, to prove that, because for a time Israel has been unchurched, and the *kingdom of God* extended to the Gentiles, therefore, there is no restoration of Israel's *temporal supremacy* to take place when they return to the Lord, and when the *kingdom of God* is again extended to them ? In point of fact, at the time our Lord spoke, the *kingdom of God* was not taken away from Israel, and needed no restoration ; but *the kingdom of which they spoke* in Acts i. 6, was taken away, and needed to be restored. And after forty days, instruction in the nature of his kingdom (Acts i. 5), no doubt the disciples knew well what they were asking.

All this, however, is but preliminary to the proper subject of this chapter ; at the same time, it has a direct bearing upon it.

There are persons who deny the restoration of Israel, simply for this reason, that, if they admit it, then they must admit a great number of other things to be literal, which they think are abhorrent to the genius of the Christian dispensation. Not so, however, Mr. Brown, and with him very many who admit the return of Israel. They frankly hold

that truth ; but there they stop. There is a mist over the rest of the ground. Anything literal beyond that they very much doubt. *Ezekiel's temple* is one of these obscurities.

The account of this temple occupies chapters xl. to xlvi. of Ezekiel. It is, so to speak, imbedded in literalities on either side. In chapter xxxvi. the restoration of the fruitfulness of the land had been foretold. In chapter xxxvii., the conversion and union of the two tribes and the ten. Then followed the last assault made on them by the armies of Gog and Magog. Here comes in *The Temple*. Then, no sooner is the delineation of the temple given, than chapters xlvii. and xlviii. take up the boundaries of the restored land, and the situation of the restored tribes.

Here, then, lies the difficulty. All seems literal on every side. And is there to arise in the midst of this a great spiritual building, possessing nothing in common with the literalities around it? The point of difficulty lies *there*. But who are called upon to answer this difficulty? Is it only Millennarians? Nay, it is far more properly those who are believers in *the restoration of Israel*. To them we say, " You see you are encompassed on either side with plain, literal events. What, then, is your explanation of this building? Is it really another temple?"

Those who hold the Premillennial view can cut the Gordian knot in some degree, by saying, "*It may be, that when the Lord comes himself, He shall use it somehow, not to cloud New Testament revelations, but to cast light upon them, by holding up the Old Testament types in their light.*" But this view we do not care to insist upon. Nor do we care to show that some Premillennialists take it *symbolically*. We know some that do. But we return to the point, viz., *the difficulty lies, not peculiarly with those who hold Premillennial views, but with all who believe in the restoration of Israel.*

We wonder at Mr. Brown's overlooking the fact, that those who oppose the Premillennial theory are very far from unanimous in asserting that this temple is to be understood spiritually. If believers in the Jewish restoration were agreed in spiritualizing it, we might fairly say, "Premillennialists may maintain the same with as much consistency as you, who can so easily overlook the literalities in which the temple is encased." But so far is this from the fact, that we find Villalpandus and Vitringa, Newcome and Secker, Henderson and others, maintaining that it is a description of a literal temple, and that that temple is the Second Temple, built after the return from captivity. These writers say, it is clear that something *literal* must be meant; not something merely emblematic. Dr.

Henderson writes, in a note upon Zech. xiv., "Difficulties there may be in making the measurements there given agree with those specified by Josephus as to the dimensions of the second temple; but *far greater difficulties attach to every attempt to refer them to a temple still future, or to view them as wholly emblematical.*" *

Not less erroneous is Mr. Brown when he states, that all Premillennialists hold the temple to be, without doubt, literal. It is not a question of a strictly Premillennial character; and many are entirely at sea on the whole matter. Believers in the restoration of Israel are in the same difficulty, because of the literalities all around it. To say that *Premillennialists must* at once say it is literal, is surely rather bold (and yet Mr. B. says so, p. 228), when the writer will not say the same to the man who firmly believes Israel's restoration. A Premillennialist's principles of interpretation are the very same, we conceive, as those of men who hold the return of Israel.

Well, but what do you hold to be true about this temple? Our reply is, in the words of Poole, "What may be designed by this temple, in spirit and in truth, and what may lie hid under this

* Many Jews hold this. One of the best views of this building and of the text that describes it, is given by *Solomon Bennet*, in a thin quarto, published in 1824.

covering of words, I desire to know from others, confessing myself entirely ignorant of this matter."

Let us reserve this matter for more light. They are quite wrong who think this a peculiarly Millenarian difficulty. We have shown it is not so. Perhaps, all conjectures about it are vain at present. Like the nebulous theory of comets, it may one day appear that the theory of those who dogmatized on the matter and rejected as "monstrous" every hint of literality, was, after all, the rashness of ignorance. This only let us press upon the reader, that the difficulty about this temple of Ezekiel is not peculiar to the Premillennialists; and that a system wherein difficulties occur is not, on that account, unlike a divine system. Are there not difficulties in all the Divine arrangements? Has not Calvinism its unsolved, though not contradictory problems? By all this our God humbles us, and keeps us humble.

No one, even of those who have undertaken to explain the spiritual things of this temple, has yet succeeded, in the opinion of any sensible man. To spiritualize it is a task beyond their reach. Let any man attempt to give a minute application, and forthwith he fails. This would not be if he had found the true key. Surely this temple must be meant to humble us, and to keep us as disciples at his feet.

O man of God ! are there not many dark things in the word ? And do they not prove a benefit to us ? They cause us to seek the teaching of the Holy Ghost. If thou readest the Scriptures, page by page, often wilt thou come upon some list of names, or some ancient record, which thou canst not at the time feel nourishing to thy soul. But do not these send thee to the Spirit of Truth ? Do they not lead thee to intense prayer for light and guidance ?

Perhaps these obscure portions of the word have done more good by sending us to our knees, than they would have done had they been as clear and simply instructive as the Gospel histories. And so this mysterious temple. We cannot enter it,—neither Millennarians nor Antimillennarians can enter it. It sends us to our knees. We will be wise to learn humility from it every time we approach its walls. It would injure us seriously were we to force our way, with all the irreverence of the Roman general, into its sanctuary, by pronouncing that the courts are no courts, but are the symbols of some spiritual truth ; and the offerings no offerings, but merely feelings in the believing soul. Let us restrain curiosity. Let us “*be sober.*” Let us learn from it whatever lesson it may suggest in all things spiritual ; only, let us not say, that this is all.

The day will declare it. We who look for the

Lord's Pre-millennial coming expect to understand its glory then, when "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

Though it be a digression, yet it may not be without its use to those who seek the "treasures hid in the sand," if here we stay for a little to point out some interesting lessons that may be learnt in this temple, notwithstanding all its mystery. As in reading the Apocalypse, there is blessing found by him who seeks to discover God's character gleaming through its dark pages, even though he be utterly perplexed as to the system and plan of the book at large; so is it here. We may find some precious glimpses of our God, amid the dimness of this temple's light.

The temple of Jerusalem built by Solomon had been twenty-five years in ruins (Ezek. xl. 1), when this vision was given. The Lord chose this time of gloom to give his people "songs in the night" by this vision of better days. Is not this like our God?

The number of times that *squares* are found in this temple is remarkable. The *four-square* dimension is significant of strength and firmness. Hence in Exod. xxxviii. 1, we are told of the brasen altar being four-square; and hence Rev.

xxi. 16, "The city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth." We might say, there is the same architect. There is the same Divine skill—the skill of him who "maketh fast the mountains, being girded with power."

In chap. xl. 16, we find that the many little chambers, wherein might be stored up all that was convenient and all that was useful, brought in from every part of the kingdom, had "posts," or pillars, ornamented with "*palm trees*." These *palm trees* occur very frequently in the temple of Ezekiel. Do they not tell of victory? Israel's first rest under the palm trees of Elim was, perhaps, a shadow of their final rest, with the palms of triumph in their hands. And here we think the same is intimated. This temple speaks of victory gained—of triumphs won.

In xl. 46, we meet with "*the sons of Zadoc*" ministering in these courts. Who are they? They are again mentioned chap. xliii. 19, and especially xlv. 15, "as having kept God's charge when Israel went astray." It is most interesting to discover here the unending faithfulness of our God. For these sons of Zadoc are no other than the descendants of *Phinehas*, son of Eleazar, (1 Chron. vi. 4—8,) to whom the Lord promised, "He shall have it, and his seed after him, even an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement

for the children of Israel." (Numb. xxv. 13.) The Lord is not slack concerning His promises, as some men count slackness. He has a memory that forgets neither the evil nor the good.

In the same chapter, ver. 44, "*the chambers of the singers*" are described. They are the apartments for those who sang and played on the harps of God. The windows look to the sun at noon-day; the sun at mid-day poured in the full quiver of his beams. Do not the song and the cheerful sun speak of joy? Now, these singers' apartments are close to the four tables where the sacrifices are examined—as if to declare that all true joy to sinners is connected with the atoning blood. Only one of these chambers looks northward. It is that of "*the sons of Zadoc*," who have been already noticed. They need not the noon-day sun to assure them of favour by lighting up their apartments; for already they have the fullest assurance of God's love in his faithfulness shewn to them when he put them into their charge.

In xl. 49, "*the pillars*" are like Jachin and Boaz, דָּבָר. They stand in tall and stately prominence in front of the porch before the holy place, reminding the worshippers, as in Solomon's days, that Jehovah "*establishes*," and that "*in him is strength*."

In xli. 6, the side chambers of the holy place are

“thirty and then three.” It is a curious coincidence that this should be the number of David's mighty men, who were *thirty*, and had *three* over them besides, in the highest place. Are these mansions meant to point us to the true David, in whose holy place shall dwell the warriors “who overcome the world,” and who are “more than conquerors through him that loved them.”

In chap. xli. 18, we find *the cherubim*—emblems of the redeemed ; and these along with “palm-trees.” Is this the victory of the redeemed again ? In ver. 19, “*The face of a man was toward the palm-tree on the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the palm-tree on the other side, through all the house round about.*” Can this be meant to indicate that *man and beast* are now enjoying blessing ? May it hint at the whole creation delivered from its vanity and corruption as well as man ?

It is remarkable that “*the altar of wood,*” that is, the altar of incense, should be prominent in this chapter, ver. 22. While the candlestick and shew-bread-table are passed by, it is specially said of this altar, “*This is the table that is before the Lord.*” It is as if there were now to be offered up so much praise, and thanks, and other adoration, that the holy place was to be filled with this alone. At all events, this prominence given to the altar of incense

should teach us how much the Lord loves the heart's desires and adorations presented through the fragrant merits of Him, who was always set forth by that altar.

From ver. 23 and onward, it would seem that in this sanctuary there is NO VEIL. Has it been rent? Is it for ever gone? There are doors that open to give full admission—wide folding-doors. Is this to indicate our freedom to enter the holiest of all?

In xlii. 20, the great wall that is "to make a separation between the sanctuary and the profane place," reminds us of the Lord's decided holiness. No neutral ground with Him.

The forty-third chapter opens with the return of the glory of the God of Israel. It comes from the mount of Olives, from which it departed. (xi. 23.) How like is this to the Son of Man! We see him leaving the guilty city with tears; and then "at his return his feet stand on the mount of Olives." The voice is his voice, "like the voice of many waters" (Rev. i. 15); and this glory is his; for it lights up earth with its shining. It is His presence alone that consecrates a temple. It is his glory that makes it glorious. Blessed are they that hear His voice, and see His glory!

In this chapter, vers. 16, 17, we find that *the altar* has steps up to it—a thing forbidden in the

days of Moses. Is the nakedness (Exod. xx. 26) of those that serve at that altar hid? Are they now so completely clothed that the former danger is away? It is a time of far deeper purity than were the days of Moses.

It appears from ver. 27th, that "*the eighth day*," i.e., our first day of the week, our Lord's day, is the special time for acceptable offering. There seems honour put upon the day of our Lord's resurrection.

In ver. 18 the priests are "not to gird *themselves with anything that causes sweat*." Since at the Fall, Adam was told that he should "eat bread with the *sweat of his face*," sweat became a token of the Fall—the mark of one under the curse. Now, in this blessed temple, there is to be no sign of the curse. The absence of this sign is to indicate the removal of the curse from the earth, or at least from the persons who serve the Lord. They need not be wet with the "sweat of their face;" for the Lord's service is all blessed service. "There is no more curse."

In chap. xlv. we see the sovereign rights of God. He gives us the portion of our cup. He assigns here a lot for the holy place, a lot for the city, a lot for the prince. He does with his own as he will.

In ver. 10, He announces his righteousness by calling on all to use "just balances, a just ephah, and a just bath." To the end, the Lord is just, and true, and righteous. He has saved souls, but never once has he deviated from justice. He is zealous for what is just still. His principles of justice are eternal.

In ver. 47th, kings are taught their duty. The civil magistrate is not to stand aloof and observe neutrality in regard to truth and error. He is to know and to follow out what he knows regarding the Lord's service.

We are taught in xlv. 13, the daily looking unto Jesus, "the Lamb of God." The necessity for this shall never change—not even in the ages to come. Nor shall the blessedness of so doing ever change.

It is scarcely needful to point out in chap. xlvii. the river from the sanctuary, typifying the law going forth from Jerusalem, borne by the Spirit of God to all lands. There it is that in the latter days the Holy Spirit is to be so remarkably poured out, and from thence, he goes forth to the Gentiles. Thus it is that the sovereignty of Jehovah shall continue to be displayed in using Israel and Jerusalem above all others.

In ver. 13th, "*Joseph shall have two portions,*"

we see Jacob's words still exhibited in their beautiful fulfilment before the eyes of the world—"Joseph is a fruitful bough—*whose branches run over the wall.*" He has two portions. (Gen. xlix. 22.)

As for vers. 15—20, any one that wishes illustrations of the geography of these places should consult *Dr. Keith's "The Land of Israel according to the Covenant with Abraham,"* where the land here described as Israel's inheritance is traced out, and shown to be "*a good land and a large,*" reaching to all these borders.

It is like the loving-kindness of the Lord to appoint such ordinances as vers. 22, 23, for "strangers." There is much of fragrance set forth in kindness shewn to the unprotected "stranger." And this grace is here exhibited. He is "the stranger's shield" for ever.

In xlviii. 1, the position of Dan is quite accordant with the words of Moses ; "Dan is a lion's whelp ; he shall leap from Bashan" (Deut. xxxiii. 22) ; for here we find he has leapt from his old abodes in the south to the farthest north of the land. The same spirit that spoke by Moses, guides Ezekiel's pen. It seems, too, in vers. 6, 7, that *Reuben* is restored to a nobler place than in ancient days. He is raised from his long degradation, and dwells now side by side with Judah.

And now, last of all, notice ver. 35. Zion shall no more be termed "forsaken" (Isaiah lxii. 4) ; for the name of Jerusalem and its temple from that day forward is "*Jehovah Shammah*." It is a glorious ending ! David on reading this close could have exclaimed, "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended." The Lord has filled the place. Heaven has come to earth.

CHAPTER VII.

LEADING OBJECTIONS. "THE EARTH BURNT UP." "ALL SAINTS AT HIS COMING."

WE are not to be repelled from a truth because of the difficulties to be surmounted in reaching it. Peter was led by the Holy Ghost to commend to us Paul's writings, "in which," said he, "are some things hard to be understood." (2 Pet. iii. 16.) It seems to be God's usual way, to give us truth in the midst of difficulties—the lily amid thorns.

We quite admit that it is lawful to shew the difficulties of a system, in order thereby to test it. But it is far from scriptural to maintain that the difficulties are a sufficient reason for rejecting proof in its favour. *The resurrection of the body* has many difficult questions connected with it. The Sadducees brought forward "*the difficulties of the resurrection*" in order to refute it. But the reply given by our Lord was, "Ye do err, *not knowing* the Scriptures, nor the power of God." (Matthew xxii. 29.) Many difficulties in regard to the

subject may be answered by a similar appeal—
“*not knowing the power of God.*”

In Paul's days, “*the difficulties of the resurrection*” were started again, in another form ; and his reply was, “Thou fool !” (1 Cor. xv. 36,) pointing out by this expression that the mistaken ideas of these objectors, arose from their not knowing *how* it was to be. Pascal wisely says, “It is fit we should know when to doubt, when to rest assured, when to submit.”

But there are some peculiar objections which are thought by many to be *conclusive* against Premillennialism, because they seem to contradict truths admitted by both sides. Of this sort there are two especially : *first*, the conflagration of the earth in 2 Peter iii. ; and *secondly*, the statement of “the Lord's Coming with ALL His saints.”

1. *The Burning of the Earth.* (2 Pet. iii. 7—13.)

The subject is brought forward by the Apostle Peter in a way that shews how eagerly and constantly the early Christians looked for the Coming of the Lord, and for the new heavens and new earth that were then to appear. It is a portion of Scripture that inculcates this duty with singular fulness, whatever be our view of its bearing on the Premillennial question. It not only reiterates the duty of longing for Christ's appearing, but it

declares that Peter and other saints of his day, "looked for the New Earth." Why should we not often spend a thought and a vehement desire thereon? How seemly is it that our earth should be the scene of such glory. "The earth," says one * who was not a Millennarian, "was witness of the offences done against Him; let this New Earth bear witness of the praises given to Him. All the combats and conflicts of the saints were upon the earth; therefore, even there also let them wear their crowns. On earth they were persecuted; give them leave in the same place to triumph. There they suffered; here, also, let them be solaced, that the memory of their past sorrows may be an accidental variation of their infinite and essential joys; when they revolve thus with themselves, 'Here we were derided, there oppressed; in this place wounded, in that martyred.' Now those old monuments of our pains shall turn to trophies of joy; and that earth, which was the land of the dead, is become the land of the living." He might have added, it is befitting that the throne should be where once stood the cross, and that the spot on which such love was manifested, should be for ever sacred in the universe of God—the spot where "righteousness and truth kissed,"—the spot where

* "Exposition of 2 Peter," by Rev. J. Adams, Rector of St. Gregory's, London. 1633.

the Father exhibited his inmost heart in receiving the prodigal !

But let us come to the words of the Apostle. He had been telling how scoffers should come in the last days, saying, "*Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*" They saw no symptom of change in the elements, and so they inferred there was no probability of any destruction coming on. Peter in reply says that they forgot the flood, how it swept away "*the world that then was.*" And now there is in reserve another element, *fire*, for a similar catastrophe. These scoffers think that there are no means in existence sufficient to produce that change ; but there is a fire in reserve, terrible beyond expression. Whatever that fire shall seize upon shall forthwith give way to its power. Whatever it shall seize upon in "the elements" and in "the heavens," (i.e., the visible skies, not the "third heavens," the "*aerei cœli*," not the "*ætherei*,") that shall forthwith melt and be dissolved. And whatever upon earth and its works that fire shall touch, shall forthwith be consumed. Since this is so, then, truly we should live as pilgrims under these heavens that shall soon pass away, "*looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,*" wherein that mighty fire shall dissolve and melt even the elements

and heavens. The stress of the reply to the infidel objection raised by the scoffers lies in the assertion of the new agent that shall be then in operation, *the fire*. Probably *the mode* of the change wrought would have been more fully spoken of had that borne upon the argument of the scoffers. But it did not ; and so obscurity is left hanging over the *manner* in which the fire shall operate on the earth.

In Daniel vii. 11, the body of the fourth beast is given to the burning flame when the Ancient of Days comes. And if we go to the Book of Revelation for further light upon the subject of this fire, the only passage bearing on it is that in which Babylon's perdition is foretold. (Chap. xviii.) That is *the only conflagration* mentioned by John ; but it is terrible. "*The smoke of her burning*" (vers. 9 and 18) reminds us of that of Sodom and Gomorrah, seen by Abraham afar off. It appears to intimate that at the Lord's Coming, all that is called "Babylon"—in short, all Christendom become Papal—shall be one blaze of consuming fire. This tremendous fire shall purge Europe from the filth of its destroyers, more effectually than Joshua's sword did Canaan ; and the soil thus cleansed shall soon receive a new race of inhabitants. It may be, too, that the effects of the conflagration shall be felt all over the wide globe, penetrating through

the earth, and working that change on it appointed by the Lord.* And thus, not *the heavens* only, and *the elements*, but *earth* also, and its works, are visited with fire. In Heb. xii. 26, God's voice is said to have shaken "*the earth*," when it made *Sinai* tremble. On that day, not only did the skies above feel the tempest, but *earth* shook as the Lord came down. So it may be said that "*earth*," is flung into the crucible, when Dan. vii. 11 and Rev. xviii. 9 are fulfilled.

I have not seen it remarked upon by interpreters, but it is at least worthy of notice, that in ver 10, "in which" is expressed by "*ἐν ᾗ*," but in ver. 12 there is a change to "*δι' ἣν*." I cannot see the special reason of this, and do not adduce it as either for or against our views.

I turn now from these general views, which at least shew some elements existing whereby to remove the alleged insurmountable nature of the difficulties. I do not build upon this view. I am satisfied with *hinting* at a direct solution, and prefer to rest the real strength of the reply to the difficulty on the following considerations.

* When, in page 379, Mr. Brown says of the nations mentioned in Isaiah lxvi. 19, that, "*they had never so much as heard of the conflagration*," he has fallen into the error of overlooking the Prophet's object; which is to say that these nations *formerly had never heard his fame*, nor seen his glory.

Isaiah is universally admitted to be the Prophet alluded in 2 Pet. iii. 13, "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth." In Isa. lxxv. 17, "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy."

Now, the *New Earth* of Peter must surely be the same as the *New Earth* of *Isaiah*, since Peter expressly refers to a foregoing prophecy. Yet in that *New Earth*, after the fire has purged our present world, after the elements have melted with heat, after "earth and its works" are burnt up—there is still to be found Jerusalem and her people; houses built; vines and vineyards. (Isa. lxxv. 21.) *How* this should be it may be difficult to say; but *that it is so* is surely asserted. And can an *Antimillennarian* escape this great difficulty? Is it not a difficulty as much to him as to us? Here is the *new earth*, with its houses and vines, and yet, says Peter, "earth and its works" were burnt up. Can the Antimillennarian explain this in any better way than we? It may be we are wrong in supposing that the tremendous Sodom-doom of *Christendom* shall be what is meant by "earth and its works" sharing in the fire that melts the ele-

ments; but even if so, what better can the Anti-millennarian say?

There is one way of replying to us that would throw the burden of the difficulty on us alone. Mr. Brown does not shrink from boldly asserting* that though Isaiah's words are referred to by Peter, yet both Peter and John (in Rev. xxi.) meant a *literal* new earth, while Isaiah means a *spiritual*! Of course, could he prove this, he would escape a difficulty. But his only proof of this strange theory is assertion—his own assertion—yes, and his own assertion in the face of his usual principles. For generally, he proceeds on the supposition that the Old Testament Prophets have given us most of the mortal and earthly, and that the New Testament writers give us the more spiritual. He tells us oftener than he should, that the prophets have more of the *terrestrial*, the Apostles of the *celestial*. But here, he just reverses the case—why, we cannot tell. Who would have expected this mode of dealing with Isaiah after such a statement as the following, in regard to Isa. lx. compared with Rev. xxi., "The mortal covering is on in the one case; it is off in the other. That is all. The Apostle, or rather he that showed him the vision, takes up the picture of the Prophet, *and having pared off the rind of it*—having separated

* P. 226.

it from all the dregs of mortality—having celestialized it, (if we may be pardoned the term for want of a better,) lo! the Prophet's description of the latter-day condition of the Gospel Church is found equally descriptive of its celestial state." (P. 223.) And yet, in our passage, his solution of the difficulty forces him to leave *Isaiah* with the *fruit* in his hand, and Peter and John pick up *the rind*! He firmly believes, "*Nothing is more evident*" than that *Isaiah* had in view only a *moral*, not a *physical* change.* While in 2 Pet. iii. 13, "*it is equally evident*" the change meant is *physical*! So far, however, is this from being "evident," that Dr. Urwick,† an Antimillennarian, and one who doubts the restoration of the Jews, has no doubt that *Isaiah* speaks of the very same event as Peter, and that it is to his words Peter refers when he says, "*According to his promise.*"

Thus, then, we find this difficulty as much in the hands of those who dispute the Premillennial views, as in ours. And since it is, undoubtedly, a difficulty to both, it should hinder neither from

* He prints "FOR," Isa. lxx. 17, in capital letters, as if that were the hinge of his explanation! Can he shew that "*for*," ever once means "*videlicet*," or is *merely* exegetical, and not *confirmatory*?

† *Urwick*, on the Second Advent, p. 30. The use made of the New Heavens and Earth in Isa. lxxvi. 22, is conclusive in favour of a *literality*.

going forward to further inquiry. On the contrary, even were Mr. B. in the right, his proof would not show that Christ does not come *till after* the Millennium; it would only make doubtful whether there were to be a Millennium on the present earth at all.

2. *The Coming of the Lord with ALL HIS Saints.*

We are not at all sure what are precisely Mr. B.'s ideas in the following passage, p. 185, when speaking of Psalm xlv., where *the Bride* is meant by "the Queen." He had said (p. 183) that Messiah is represented there as taking steps to obtain for himself a Bride from amongst men. But at vers. 10, 11, this union is accomplished; and says he, "What is the result? She is richly compensated for the abandonment of her own people and her father's house; for, instead of these, *she has a race of her own*, with whom *she fills the thrones of the world*; 'whom,' says the Psalmist, 'thou mayest make princes in all the earth.' The world is then, ultimately, to be in the hands of *the Church's offspring*." He seems here to make a distinction between *the Bride* and *her offspring*.

What Mr. B. meant by this distinction, it is difficult to say; his meaning is far from plain. But we use his language as fitted exactly to express a distinction we are now about to state and

defend. We hold that Scripture reveals to us that there is a difference between *the Bride* and *Her Children*. The Bride is that Church which is taken out of a world lying in wickedness during its days of incessant struggle with sin, Satan, and sinful men. *The Bride* is the Church taken out from amid all evil and trial and sorrow, in the days of the Patriarchs, in the days of Israel, and in the times of the Gentiles. This elect body is *The Bride*, and shall be complete at the Lord's Coming. Not one other shall be added to this body after the Lord's Coming—not one.

Even the "nobility of heaven differ" in rank and office. There are "principalities, powers, mights, dominions." All are not equally honoured, though all are equally blessed. And so in the case of the redeemed. The sovereignty of a redeeming God shall be seen for ever, in the stations which he assigns to his ransomed.

The analogy of angelic orders might lead us to expect something of difference in the places held by the redeemed. For, while angels are now all equally secure in their standing in Christ, our head and theirs, (Eph. i. 10 ; Col. i. 20,) they are not on that account all equally glorious. There are among them cups and flagons, vessels of larger and of smaller size, while all alike hang on the nail. It shall be so also among the saints re-

deemed. And here is one discovery of that difference, viz., all saints redeemed amid toil and temptation and sorrow and warfare, shall form *the Bride* at the Lord's Coming; and this *Bride* shall reign with Him a thousand years. Then, as to the saints who shall people earth during these thousand years, they are as really saints, and as simply dependent on this Head, as any of those already in glory. As to state, character, and modes of spiritual life, they are not saints of another stamp from those of the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Gentile days; but, on the contrary, they are converted as they were, live by faith as they did, war with their own corruptions as they, and hang on Christ alone to the last. It is only their *circumstances* that are different from former saints. They live during these Millennial days with scarcely any, or rather with no external opposition at all; without persecution, and without Satan's temptations, for he is bound. It seems good, therefore, to the Sovereign God to make a difference between them, and those that lived not in Millennial days. And so his sovereignty shines forth even then, when all earth is walking on the narrow way.

Now those who live during these Millennial days, wherein no outward persecution assails them, and wherein no devil tempts, are *The Children of the*

bride after the marriage supper of the Lamb. The Lamb comes, and his "wife has made herself ready." The marriage takes place. Now begins the reward long promised. Now prayers are answered that lay unanswered hitherto. Now "the cry of his own elect" is remembered. Now "the vials full of odours," which they held up to Him, are acknowledged. (Rev. v. 8 ; Ps. lxxii. 19 ; Luke xviii. 7.) Now the cries of those under the altar are heard. The consequence is this ; Satan is bound, according as his redeemed so often prayed ; the wicked is consumed out of the earth, as they used to ask ; Antichrist is consumed, as they never ceased requesting ; Jerusalem and Judah are raised from the dust, in acknowledgment of the watchman's never-resting cry ; and souls without number, in every kingdom and tongue and people, are born to God. Is not this (though, of course, in one view the effect of the Divine purpose) the answer to *the Bride's* many cries and tears ? Is it not her travail-pangs that now terminate in the birth of a progeny that fills the earth ? The Millennial race that people earth are converted, sanctified, and saved, in answer mainly to *the Bride's* cries and prayers, when on earth. She may claim the millions upon millions of souls that then fill the world as *her Children*.

O, what an inspiring view ! O, how it nerves

us to unceasing prayer and supplication ! *All* our prayers shall be answered then,—all our efforts be seen to have borne fruit. The blessed fulness of Millennial days is to be the response of God to present prayer and present labour. We never once breathe a desire into Christ's censer in vain ; never once bear the cross in vain ; never toil in faith in vain. The children of the Millennium shall be our children. We are preparing for ourselves a noble progeny then, even if now we see little done. Men of faith and love, who deplore the scantiness of the harvest now, shall find then that they get their bosom filled with sheaves. Then shall be brought to pass that saying that is written, "*Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.*" (Psalm xlv. 16.)

The reader will see that, while we consider "*the Bride*" altogether different, in point of station and place, from *the Children of the Millennial day*, we hold them to be the same as to other things. Children are not different in nature from the parents. We wholly reject all theories about an Adamic race, or anything similar ; we maintain that the Christians of that age shall be found in the miry clay by the sovereign God ; converted by his Holy Spirit ; led to see sin and the Saviour, as we do ;

sanctified, probably far more rapidly and thoroughly, yet still by the same Spirit, through the Word ;* and so prepared for a future eternity. Is our view absurd ? Is it even startling ? Is it not calm, rational, and comforting ?

But to all this Mr. Brown asserts, there is an invincible difficulty at the very threshold. He asserts, that when Christ comes, He comes with *all the saints that ever are to be*.

Notwithstanding his caveats, the positive insisting on the unlimited universality of "ALL saints" in this case, would go a considerable way to countenance the Arminian interpretation of "*all men*" in the controversy. But we pass from this to his proofs. His two first passages are the only strong ones on the question ; and we undertake completely to neutralize them. They are to be found in 2 Thess. i. 10 ; "When He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in *all them that believe* ;" and in 1 Thess. iii. 13, "That He may establish you unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ *with all his saints*." These are, in fact, the only

* To say that "the Word of God, as a means, will be put out of date," because at that time the living shall not be looking for the Second Advent, but looking back to it, is at once refuted by pointing to the Old Testament, so much of which is the experience of the past, and yet guides the saint's feet to this day.

two passages that even seem to support his view, and we maintain they do not support it in any way, if rightly understood. We do not at all need the criticism alluded to by Mr. B. at page 45, note.* Possibly, indeed, angels may be included in the "*all his holy ones.*" But we meet his remarks, first, by asking if common readers ever imagined it meant more than just "*all saints then existing?*" When we speak of the Popish "All Saints' Day," every one understands that it was a day in honour of "*all saints that had lived,*" not including all that ever were hereafter to live. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, chap. xiii. 13, "*All the saints salute you,*" he meant all that were then at Philippi where he wrote his epistle, not all the saints every-

* Some render the text, "*With all his holy ones.*" We do not adopt this; but we may remark on Mr. B.'s mode of dealing with it. He says, "*it thrusts in*" angels, and that this is done "*just to take THE SAINTS out of one of our texts.*" Now, by this style of remark, he insinuates unfair motives in his opponents; indeed, he is too fond of *characterizing* the argument he refutes, as well as refuting it, a practice of which it has been truly said, "It only differences our affections, not our cause." The truth is, he is so far mistaken in insinuating such a reason here that the criticism referred to occurs in W. Lowth's "Commentary on the Minor Prophets," at Zech. xiv. 5, "The words," says he, "are a description of Christ's Coming to judgment attended *with all his holy angels.*" . . . "So the word *saint* is used in the New Testament, 1 Thess. iii. 13, and Jude ver. 14." W. Lowth was not combating Antimillennarians.

where, far less all that ever were to live. 2. Does it mean anything else than "*all saints who had till then existed*" in Deut. xxxiii. 3? "All his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet." Or Ephes. vi. 18, "Watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints." Or Ps. cxlviii. 14, "The praise of all his saints, even of the children of Israel, a people near unto Him." Mr. Wood truly observes,* in regard to a similar case in Gen. vi. 13, "*The end of all flesh* is come before me," that none supposes it means anything else than the end of *all then living*. We adduce these instances to show how little can be built on the "*all*." And then 3, we take Mr. B. to Zech. xiv. 5, "*The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee*." He says, in the note, p. 46, that it determines nothing on either side. We say that it annihilates his argument. For, take the words either in a spiritual or literal sense, this is plain, they occur in a passage which, *it is universally agreed, refers to Premillennial times*. It is clear that here, at least, "*ALL the saints*" means, all previous to the *Millennium*. Can any fair criticism deny this? Is it not plain as day, that "*ALL the saints*" here exist before the saints of the Millennium have been born? For these reasons it appears to us beyond

* "Affirmative Answer," page 21.

dispute, that the words in 1 Thess. iii. 13, and 2 Thess. ii. 10, cannot be proved to refer to more than all *saints who exist at his Coming*; and whether there are to be other saints existing *after* his Coming, is to be proved by other passages.

As for Mr. B.'s other proofs. One is 1 Cor. xv. 23, "Christ, the first-fruits; afterward, they that are Christ's, at his Coming." There is surely nothing here opposed to our view. The scope of the chapter does not deal in the *number* of saints, as Mr. B. would hint, but simply in the *mode and principle* of their resurrection. Another is Col. iii. 4, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory:" a text perfectly accordant with our view. These Colossian saints, and all who, like them, continue to follow the Lamb in this state of warfare and temptation, shall, at his Coming, appear with Him in glory. Another is Ephes. v. 27, "Christ loved the Church that He *might present it to himself a glorious Church.*" Mr. B. says, "at his Second Coming." We do not know if he makes any distinction between "*presenting it to himself,*" and presenting it to *the Father*. But, at all events, the idea of the passage is, that the final issue of his dealings with this Church shall be his presenting to himself every member of it *holy and without blemish*, whether these be saints of

Patriarchal, Jewish, Gentile, or Millennial times. There is not a word here as to *the time* of this presentation, so that nothing can be proved by it. One passage more is Rev. xxi. 2, 9, "*The Bride, the Lamb's Wife*;" and this we explained above.

If now it be objected, "But your view represents *the Bride* as very greatly superior in honour and glory to the saints gathered afterwards; and will not this prevent unity at last?" We say, No; for already there is unity among angels, where exist powers, and thrones, and principalities; where Michael excels Gabriel; and where Gabriel has been honoured above his brethren. The object of the distinction may be to exhibit for ever in glory, as in grace, the *divine sovereignty*. As that little spot of earth, *Palestine*, was the seat of far more and far higher deeds than all earth beside, so that company of saints, called *The Bride*, shall be the object of infinitely greater honour and glory than the numbers without number, the millions upon millions, of the Millennial day. "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight." It will then be plain that God alone is Lord of all. When He is seen taking the one abused talent out of the napkin and giving it to him that has ten talents already, who will not cry, "O, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." There will remain a mystery of sovereignty about

Him for ever, that will keep every eye on the Lord, and not on the creature. His sceptre will be plainly seen wielded over them.

Meanwhile, let us who may have part with *the Bride* in her reward and glory, be stirred up to a holy ambition. Perhaps, we sometimes cry in our days of discouragement, "O, that I had wings as a dove! I would fly away and be at rest!" Perhaps there is none of us but now and then sinks down to Jeremiah's sadness, and begins with the prophet of Anathoth to look to the quiet desert with the intense wish, "Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people!" Who of us is there that never cried in the battle, "O, wretched man that I am!" Who of us has not sat brooding over the misery of man and beast, and over the desolation of a cursed earth, till we "stravailed and groaned" for the "manifestation of the sons of God." But, courage! we war a good warfare. We never in vain drop a tear in such a cause, nor feel one pang of grief for God's dishonoured law and despised love. Let us share the sorrows of the Lord, who in all our afflictions is afflicted. Let us deny ourselves. Let us day and night labour to be holy, by faith that rests on Him. Let us hate Antichrist in every shape, and join the souls under the altar in their appeal for holy vengeance.

Let us by all means seek to bring many souls to the cross, reckoning our gains by the souls we win. And so doing, holy brethren, we shall enter on our reward at the marriage of the Lamb. The Bridegroom, "*the Lord our Righteousness*," gives us liberty to sink our name in his (Jer. xxxiii. 16); and as he entered into our woe and tried its lowest depths, so does he shew us, "Enter into the joy of your Lord," as our happy exchange with Him on that day.

"*Behold! the Bridegroom cometh!*" How solemn the inquiry, "Am I now at this moment *ready?*" for the Bride is found prepared (Rev. xix. 7), when the Bridegroom cometh suddenly.

CHAPTER VIII.

LEADING OBJECTIONS. THE CHARGE OF EXCITEMENT,—OF DEROGATING FROM THE INTERCESSORY WORK OF CHRIST,—OF SUPPOSING A NEW KIND OF CONVERSION,—OF DESTROYING THE SOLEMNITY OF THE JUDGMENT-DAY.

THE objections taken notice of in this chapter are all of them such as are advanced not from anything preceding, but from things that follow in the train of the Premillennial Advent. On this account, both the objections and the reply to the objections are often necessarily more vague than they would otherwise be.

We do not reckon among the number of such objections the ungrounded charge, that we derogate from our Master's glory by representing Him as reigning on earth. If there be one thought in our souls that does not tend to his highest exaltation, let that thought perish. Let our whole views fall to dust if inconsistent with the song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and

riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." But everything hitherto advanced on this head, by those who differ from us, is a mere assumption. It proceeds on a theory of their own as to *how* Christ shall manifest himself on the day of his kingdom ; and our reply to all such is, We are ignorant of the *manner* of his reign, but we hold *the fact*, and believe that it is a reign of consummate glory, without one vestige of humiliation. The King will shine forth as the sun from his pavilion upon the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness ; but more than this we know nothing. And if it be asked, how will men be able to bear even a glance of that glory ? we again say, "What we know not now we shall know hereafter ;" and we point to Exodus xxiv. 10, where seventy elders of Israel, who the day before quaked and feared, were next day on the same hill, and "*saw the God of Israel*," whose glory was "like devouring fire." (Ver. 17.)

But these are difficulties which our more reasonable opponents will admit, at once, are fairly answered by the appeal *ad ignorantiam*, "what we know not now." We proceed, therefore, to points that admit of a more tangible handling. Such are the following four objections, which we find in the works of various writers.

I. *It is alleged, that to be looking for the Lord's*

appearing as a near event,—as, in fact, one that may take place ere we lie down in the grave,—*begets a feverish excitement which tends to throw the mind off its balance*. This is the substance of what adversaries charge on our views—feverish excitability, giving rise to “much that is erratic in doctrine and in practice.”

In reply we might ask, what must be the inevitable state of those who shall at last be within a few years or months of that event; those, we mean, whom our opponents suppose will be waiting for Christ after the thousand years are run out. With absolute certainty before them of the signs of his Coming being all already spent, how intense must be the fever of that generation! So that this objection only puts the supposed evil in another place, it does not at all remove it. It gets rid of it by deferring it to a future day. Or if they say, that even then the nearness of the day of God will be concealed, we ask them to show how this ever can be after their thousand years? And if it were concealed, would not this secrecy entail upon that generation a false calmness, a calmness that rested wholly on misconception and ignorance? We are charged with applying a false stimulus to the present generation by maintaining the probable nearness of the Lord's appearing; but will our opponents consent to be charged with lulling the

men of that generation into a false repose, by hiding from them the coming event that will be at their doors ?

But all this supposed danger is a mere fancy of the imagination. We shall endeavour to show in a future chapter that Paul, in 2 Thess. ii. 1, 2, did not speak of this feverish excitability being caused by *what is true*, but by *what is false*. No *truth of God*, we venture to say, has the effect of destroying the balance of the soul. And if it be *a fact* that the Lord's Coming is near, then that being a truth of God, the soul will be sanctified and improved thereby. So that we are brought to this conclusion, that, in spite of all alleged results, we are fearlessly to ascertain if it be *the truth*.

We are fully persuaded that our view tends to solemnize and calm the soul, to sober down excitement, to allay feverish expectations, to balance faith and love by the addition of hope, provided always that *the Person of the Lord* be the prominent idea. If the attendant glory dazzle the soul in room of this, then it is that the soul is off its balance. But, the more ardent the breathing of the soul to *the Person*, the nearer is it to its right state, its calmest adoration ; and if the approach of *the Person*, his coming face to face to meet us, add intensity to these breathings of the soul, then it lends an impulse all in the right direction. There

are Premillennialists who are extravagant and feverish ; but their unsober views may be traced to a plain cause. It is not their looking too much for the Lord that is the cause, but their looking too little for Him. As the gloom of a desponding soul is caused by the person having too little of Jesus, not by having too much, even so does the analogy hold here. These mistaken persons are led off by fixing far too little attention on *the Person* who is to come, while they talk incessantly of *the glory*.* Their natural temperament predominates in them still, instead of being calmed by seeing more of *the Person* who is to come. Their eye is blinded by the lustre round the Son of man ; and hence, they go astray. But what philosophy would justify us in concluding that, since this is the case with some, viz., with persons of a certain temperament and with defective views,—therefore, all who like them look for Christ's speedy coming must, of course, fall into their errors ? These feverish minds are the exceptions, not the rule. Hundreds of saints continue in silent and most peaceful meditation on this Blessed Hope, and no man remarks them ;

* In that day every saint will feel as to the glory, just as the historian beautifully writes was felt on another occasion,—
 “Οἱ δὲ ἄνθρωποι, καλοῦ ὄντος τοῦ θεαματος τὸν Ἀβραδάτου καὶ τοῦ ἄρματος, ὃν προσθεν ἐδύναντο θεασθαι αὐτὸν πρὶν ἢ Πανθεῖα ἀπηλθεῖν.” (Xenoph. An. vi. 26.)

but if an excitable mind appear and exhibit some vagaries, then every one hears of this man. The sputtering of the flame on the golden candlestick would draw marked attention ; and yet that occasional irregularity bore no proportion to the long hours during which the lamp burnt with clear, full, noiseless flame.

II. *It is alleged that the Premillennial Coming must be a mere delusion, because were Christ to leave the Father's right hand, all conversion would forthwith cease.* It is maintained that our Lord's intercession depends on his remaining at the right hand, and could not be carried on here on earth. And hence, it would follow, that there can be no conversion of souls after He has come to our world, and so, of course, no Millennial days wherein souls fly to Him "as doves to their windows."

Our reply to this argument is, Where does the Word of God assert or imply this doctrine ? Where is this doctrine of the importance of the *locality* to be found ? Where is there one passage that states that *intercession cannot be carried on any where but at the right hand* ? We do not know of one ; on the contrary, we assert that this theory tends to draw us away from the true reason why a sinner is accepted. It tends to darken the sinner's view of the true nature of our Lord's intercession, in as much as it fixes the mind on a locality as necessary,

instead of keeping us fixed upon the Father's acceptance. Our Lord interceded while on earth three and thirty years. He interceded, too, before he came. Yet he was not at the *Right Hand*. If he interceded before He came to earth, why not also after he has come? If he interceded while suffering, why not while reigning? What the Bible asserts is, the necessity of *presenting the sacrifice* in the presence of God. It was necessary to carry in the blood to the mercy seat, on the great day of atonement, as well as to shed it at the altar. It was needful that Jesus should go up, and carry in His blood—His person as the Lamb slain—to the holiest of all, before the Father. The presentation, and the acceptance that followed thereon, are the acts that are so vastly important in regard to reconciliation, and the consequent gift of the Holy Ghost, and all that was included therein.

That the *presentation* of Himself was infinitely important is evident from such passages as John xvi. 10, "Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more." And ver. 28, "Again I leave the world, and go to the Father." The ancient types shadowed forth this truth in the sprinkling of the blood before the Lord, after the sacrifice was slain. And many are the occasions in the law of Moses where this is required to be done, sometimes "before the veil," or "before the

Lord ;” sometimes, on the mercy-seat. The reason is obvious. This presentation of the atonement to the Lord was a public declaration of all claims being settled. When Jesus ascended to the right hand of power, it was as if in presence of the hosts of God he had come up and put the gold pieces of the ransom money into the Father’s hand. And thus the Father is able evermore to point to this ransom as the ground of all his gracious acts to sinners.

Now, as this *presented sacrifice* was to be the ground on which the Father was to dispense all grace, it is put in that place where it is certain to meet every eye in heaven. It is put beside the Father. Jesus in our nature is seated at the Right Hand ! Every eye that looks towards the throne sees the Lamb too ! God’s vindicated holiness is seen—God’s honoured law is seen—God’s grace and truth are seen—in Him who sits in that seat of eternal glory. Every act of grace to sinners turns the eye of all heaven anew to the right hand.

Besides this, the Father set our mediator beside him out of love to his Person. “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, and take it up again.” (John x. 17.) Out of love to Him for what he is himself, and for what he did, the Father delights to have Him “always before him,” (Prov. viii. 30,) as in the ancient days. The Father’s

eye falls on the ransom and the ransomer, every moment, with ineffable complacency. O most glorious truth for us the sons of men ! Our advocate is thus loved and crowned with honour and glory ! Surely the love shewn to Him is love to us also ! The honour shown to Him is honour to us also ! The Father loveth us in Him. Let us draw near ;* let us taste His deepest love.

Now this view is sufficient to explain why it was necessary that Jesus, having finished His work, should go in to the Holiest of All with it, and present it there. We see blessed truth in that arrangement ; and that blessed truth has been exhibited to us for eighteen hundred years. Nor can it ever be lost now. The argument it has afforded of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice, and of his goodwill to the sinner, must remain eternally the same. Even as the fact of the Resurrection, though past in a moment of time, exhibited such an energy of power (see Eph. i. 19, 20) as nought can ever surpass or cause to be forgotten ; so the session of Christ at the right hand for such a length of time remains a fact to us, the inferences from which are eternally true. That session at the right hand may end

* When our Lord says in John xx. 17, "Touch me not, for *I am not yet ascended*," he intimates surely that what would open the access, was *his ascending to the Father*, i.e., his presentation of himself as the offered sacrifice.

sooner or later for ought we know ; but the fact that Jesus *has sat there** *after His resurrection* is the all-important fact to us.

Such being the reason of our Lord's sitting at the right hand, it is evidently an error to attach importance to the locality, any further than as *the locality brings honour with it*. The place was chosen for the honour connected with it ; even as Solomon placed his mother at his right hand to do her honour. (1 Kings ii. 19.) But if Solomon could have done *more honour* to his mother by putting her in another situation, would he have hesitated ? And shall we not believe that if the hour comes, when this earth's dominion shall become the seat of chiefest honour, it shall then be given to Christ, while still he is loved, and listened to, and delighted in, and always answered, as much as before ? The rule laid down for our guidance here is found in John vii. 39, where "*Jesus glorified*" is spoken of as the hinge on which all the other events moved. The *locality* is nothing in itself ; but "*Jesus glorified*," is every way important.

We are prepared now to see the error lurking in the view that our Lord must continue in heaven so

* When the High Priest had completely sprinkled the blood on the mercy-seat, he came out. He *left the memorial of his sacrifice there*, but he needed not to remain personally there.

long as he continues to intercede. All that Scripture says is, He must continue to exhibit and present this sacrifice with all its merit. He must do this for every soul that is ever saved, up to the end of all things. At present he does this in heaven, making intercession for us there. (Romans viii. 34, and Heb. ix. 24.) At his Coming he will be on earth, yet still making intercession for us in the same way ; “appearing in the presence of God for us,” though the locality be changed. He will then, even as now, be as truly seen by the Father, and heard by the Father ; yea, he will be more than ever then the acknowledged of the Father, being laden with the honour and glory of the kingdom. And truly the intercession of one whom all the universe shall then behold worthy to receive honour, and glory, and blessing, such intercession surely in such circumstances shall be not a whit less prevalent than now ?

It is nowhere said, “He continueth *ever in heaven*”* in order to intercede. If that be the sense any attach to the words of the Apostle in Hebrews

* The text in Heb. x. 12 is not alleged on either side, for it is generally agreed now that it ought to be thus pointed : “When he had offered *one sacrifice for sins for ever*”—one for ever—never to be repeated, its effects being so full and satisfactory. He sits at the right hand at rest, witnessing these effects, and directing them.

vii. 25, 27, they have been quite misled. The true sense is, "This man never dieth, like priests on earth, and his office never passes into other hands; hence he himself is the only priest now, and abides so to the end." * Not a word is said as to the necessity of *the locality*.

In like manner we hold that John xvi. 7, means "If I go not *to present my sacrifice*, the Comforter will not come." The principle still is "Jesus glorified." (John vii. 37.) And he required to go up into the Holy of Holies that there his one offering might be accepted, and himself welcomed home by his well-pleased Father. But on the very same principle, is it not every way becoming, that when Jesus *is more than ever glorified*, as all admit He shall be at his Coming again, there should then be a greater outpouring of the Holy Ghost than ever yet has been? Where is there one reason for saying that the outpouring must *cease* when He comes? As well might you argue that believers must *then cease to receive the Holy Ghost*; whereas that is their day of receiving abundant grace, (1 Pet. i. 13), because Jesus shall be so abundantly glorified in them.

In the "Christian Instructor" for 1839, this passage, and also chaps. ix. 12, and viii. 4, are all quoted against us. But the context of each passage shews that they do not bear on the point now discussed.

There is but one real objection to what we have now maintained. We see that it is not the case that the Spirit must be given to the end "*by Christ within the veil.*"* He may give the Holy Spirit, (and, we believe, will give him,) more abundantly after He has come from within the veil; for then He will fill earth with the Spirit even as the waters cover the sea. It is not there, then, that any objection to our view is to be found. But there seems an objection at first sight in Psalm cx. 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord, *Sit thou at my right hand UNTIL I make thine enemies thy footstool.*"

The whole force of this difficulty in our way lies in the understanding of the clause "*making thine enemies thy footstool.*" If that meant the subduing to God and his Christ of every creature on earth that is to be subdued, then, of course, the point would be settled. But we unhesitatingly maintain that it means something very different from this; it means the conquest which Christ is to gain over his foes *at the period of his Second Advent*. He is to sit on the right hand *till the hour arrives* when his long-resisting foes shall be made his foot-

* Mr. Brown maintains this, and finds one Premillennialist who held his views, *Joseph Perry*. But is it not possible that both the Millennarian and the Antimillennarian agree in this instance in being wrong?

stool; *till the hour* arrives when, like Joshua's captains (Josh. x. 24), he shall draw near to put his feet on the neck of these his enemies, and to take possession of his inheritance. The Psalm itself points out this to be the meaning; for it goes on to speak of a people gathered round him in that day of his power, who shall be his willing people.

Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 25, is far from contradicting this idea when he says,—not quoting from this Psalm, but expressing in similar words that yet more remains to be done,—“*For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under his feet.*” In that passage we understand Paul to be continuing the history of Christ. One large volume of his history—one book of the chronicles of his kingdom—embraced the whole period referred to in Psalm cx. 1, his sitting at the right hand till the day of his great victory, when the kingdoms of this world were to be his one kingdom. But here, in 1 Cor. xv. 25, is a second volume of the chronicles of his kingdom, containing the history of his *reign during the time when his enemies have been made his footstool*. For He reigns all that time, and must reign till no foe shall ever rise again. “*Death, the last enemy,*” (see the Greek, “*ὁ θάνατος ἐχθρὸς καταργεῖται ὁ θάνατος,*”) is destroyed at his Second Advent in a yet more effectual way than

it was "*abolished*" (or, as the word there is, "*destroyed*") at his First Coming. (2 Tim. i. 10.) Then *its death-blow* was given by the rescue of such a multitude from its grasp, and the certainty exhibited of the final annihilation of its dominion. This takes place when the great white throne gives forth its decisions, and "death and hell (*ᾠδης*) are cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx. 14.) The Lord Jesus must reign till he has repelled the last attempt of Satan (Rev. xx. 9), and given forth the *final* doom of death. (Ver. 14.) "He must reign till He has put ALL *his* enemies under his feet."

Thus, then, we find nothing in the whole Word of God to lead us to believe that our Lord's *sitting at the Father's right hand is an arrangement necessary to the continuance of his intercession*. But it is one of the wise and holy arrangements of Jehovah, according to his eternal purpose, that the Mediator should sit in honour and glory there until the hour strikes when He shall be invested with all "his own and his Father's glory, and the glory of his angels," and proceed to take earth as his wide possession. In Psalm ii. 8, the Father had said, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the Heathen;" He has asked this while sitting at his right hand, and now goes down to enjoy the gift more glorified than ever, more openly and evi-

dently than ever “worthy to receive all blessing,” and, therefore, more than ever entitled to *intercede* with the Father for us.

Amazing truth! That glorious one in all his majesty and grace, is intercessor for us; and in interceding, “appears for us,” or shews himself in our room. It is as if He said in every act of intercession, “Father, I will that thou shouldest set that sinner aside and take my whole person in his room! Take me in all my worth and glory—me whom thou so lovest—me in whom is all thy delight, and consider *that sinner* as now held forth *in me!*” O how infinitely full our acceptance on that day! We can say to the Father on that day, “Holy Father, thy well-beloved, whom thou hast so crowned and encompassed with thy glory, thine only-begotten, *appears for me!* As He is, so I am! (1 John iv. 17.) Behold me all fair, all glorious, all worthy of thy love for ever.”

It is thus that even while here in his glorious kingdom, Christ shall still truly be looked on by God as “*appearing for us,*”—shewing himself in our stead—the daysman in all his beauty in behalf of those for whom He intercedeth always—*the king*, though still the *priest*.*

* The stress sometimes put upon the *external pre-eminence of Israel*, as if that in any manner interfered with the principle of grace recognising neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor

We come now to others of the alleged dangerous consequences of believing in the Premillennial Coming.

III. It is said, that *our views regarding the conversion of sinners in the Millennial days are completely at variance with the scriptural view of what conversion is at present.* This is charged on us by many objectors, from an entirely mistaken idea of the place and influence we assign to the

free, is a parallel instance of a case where the true object of an arrangement has been misapprehended. See this illustrated in "Prophetic Landmarks," by the Rev. H. Bonar, Kelso, p. 287—290. We may be permitted to remark here, that it seems to us that in more points than this one Mr. Brown's theological statements are erroneous. Thus, his idea that sin always exists in us in connexion with Satan's co-operation,—an idea which he is led to by "*the exigencies of his system*" (to use his own phrase) at a later part of his work, p. 301. But, farther; his statement is very defective in p. 72. He says, that the Redeemer's authority to enlighten his people as their *Prophet*, and subdue and govern them as *their King*, "*springs from his purchase of them as Priest.*" Surely, it would be more correct to say that all this authority sprang from the Father's grant to Him when he said, "Lo! I come." It is not because He purchases them that He is their King; but He was appointed by the Father their King, and, *therefore*, purchased them. It is the *exercise of his authority* as Prophet and King that may be said to be based on his redemption-work. By going thus back to the *original reason*, we see far better why his three offices are inseparably connected in their exercise. And just so, when we discern the *reason* of his going to the Father's right hand, we see how He can still intercede when He has left that right hand.

personal appearing of Christ in this matter. They, suppose we hold the belief, that *Christ's personal appearing* is to be the main instrument of conversion then ; whereas we maintain that conversion then shall be the very same thing as conversion now.

It is right, however, to notice here that all Premillennialists have not been of our opinion. Some have held that conversion then shall be a different process in some respects, and that saints then shall be a different sort of Christians,—a kind of Adamic race. Now we wholly renounce this view. We have not the slightest sympathy with it. It is not a view that our principles lead to ; for our belief of the Premillennial Coming in no way alters our belief in the Lord's true and faithful word, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

What is *conversion*? It is the work of the three persons of the Godhead, in behalf of the sinner who before was in the gall of bitterness. We take Zechariah xii. 9—14, as exhibiting this truth. There we see a barren, fruitless soil spread before our eyes—Israel in their unbelief ; on whose souls you might sow the precious seed with no more success than if you cast wheat or barley into furrows traced on the sea-shore. But the precious rain of the Holy Spirit descends. See it falling fast ! "*I will pour upon the house of David and*

the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplications." The soil is fertilized now. These souls are softened and quickened now. For the Holy Ghost has come as "*Spirit of grace.*" In free love has he descended on them, for his character is "*grace.*" And he has come for the special purpose of awakening the cry, "What shall I do to be saved?" and hence, he is also called here, "*Spirit of supplications.*" His character being "*Spirit of grace,*" he delights in the office here set forth, viz., that of raising "*supplications,*"—such cries as a drowning man sends forth in the intense earnestness of deep-felt danger. He throws the now awakened sinner into the posture of a suppliant; "O God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" But still the awakened soul is only beginning to feel its case. All is vague as yet. The bullet has struck; but the man is stunned, and cannot point to the particular spot. Soon, however, conviction takes a definite shape. The man "mourns for having pierced the Lord."* His treatment of God—of God the Father and God the Son—engrosses the anxiety of the sinner's conscience. He mourns really, he mourns deeply, he mourns apart; till, lo!

* "*Me*" and "*Him,*" (ver. 10,) the Father feeling the spear that pierced the side of the Son in his bosom. Just as in vii. 13, of this prophet, "*He*" and "*I*" refer to the same person.

the same Spirit who touched his heart before (for it is "In that day"), opens his eyes to see "*the fountain for sin and uncleanness.*" (Chap. xiii. 1.) Christ's person and work perceived by the troubled soul are the waters of the Fountain; and in the act of believing what this discovered Saviour reveals, it is at rest. It is washed. The man may enter the camp now. He is clean.

Such shall be the conversions of Millennial days. For this whole passage refers to these times of refreshing. They shall be days of peculiar joy; for the travail-pangs of the new birth shall over all the earth be found giving place to, and soon forgotten in, the "joy that shall follow,"—the joy of believing in the glorious Redeemer, the serpent lifted up for the healing of the camp. Still, in each individual case, conversion has been the same. It ever is "the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, and enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ and renewing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel." (*Shorter Catechism.*)

What place, then, do we assign to the Second Coming in those days? So far as *conversion* is concerned, the mere event itself will have all the influence of a most remarkable providence, but not more. God awakens men oftentimes by sudden fear, by a thunder-storm, by the death of a friend at their

side, or the like; He will, in those days, awaken thousands by the providences attending, and circumstances connected with, their Lord's appearing. When "our God comes with vengeance," then, at that time, "shall the eyes of the blind be opened." (Isa. xxxv. 5.) But still, it is the Holy Ghost that is the agent; external circumstances are only the tools by which the blessed Spirit may see good to work.

We believe, too, that Satan being bound shall be an advantage to souls then. *The seed sown* shall not be picked up so often and so soon. There will be no "birds of the air" for this work. But, while this is true, *conversion itself* will be the same thing as ever.

And thus any one may see that the Premillennial Coming is not to be charged with encouraging men to go on in sin, in the secret hope of finding a different conversion in those days from what now they hate. If any are looking for the opening of another door than "the *strait gate*," their hope is a delusion, a suggestion of the devil; their expectation shall perish. We repel all such charges as these.

We might, however, stay a moment here to retort the charge on some of those who vehemently object to our view. Some of these hold that the world is to glide gently and smoothly into a state of Millennial prosperity. In some silent way nations are to drop their evil customs, present means are to be found everywhere successful, and

speedily we are to see the earth full of righteousness. Now, this theory leads men to slumber and sleep. It leads them to grasp at shadows, thinking that as these palmy days must be coming on, surely such and such appearances and new phenomena are part of it. And many such will, no doubt, secretly hope that they shall be borne into the harbour in the setting in of the great tide. We might, at least, plausibly retort this if we were disposed. But we return to our statement, that the converted of the Millennial days shall be the same solid, substantial, "new creatures" as they are now, so that our view gives no encouragement to the unconverted, even in appearance. On the contrary, we say, "Ah! brother, there is no hope for thy unconverted soul. Hear that trumpet-sound! It is the Judge come, and thou art not born again! He cries, 'Ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'" Then that thunder-clap is heard,—the sound of the door shut as the Bridegroom goes into the marriage. There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth with thee and thy unconverted friends.

Well, then, it is farther said to us, "*How do you speak of conversions in the earth, after the door is shut? Do you still mean the same kind of conversion?*" Yes, but not among the same class of people.*

* Dr. Urwick seems to take as an axiom what needs the strongest proof, "That the Second Advent will not take

We fully believe that then the door is finally and for ever shut upon a certain class, those, namely, who are spoken of in the context. The passage referred to is Matt. xxv. 1—13. And we take 2 Thess. i. 8, as parallel. We find, by these two passages, that all who previously heard the Gospel, yet believed not, and all who professed to be Christ's, but did so in profession only, shall be punished on that day with everlasting ruin. In 2 Thess. i. 8, the clause, "*Who obey not the Gospel,*" points to persons to whom the Gospel is preached; and Matt. xxv. 1—10, more definitely still declares, that even those who appeared fair to human eye, yet were not what they seemed, shall be shut out. *All that had a lamp without oil* are shut out. Who are these? Not the Heathen, for they never had a lamp in their hands. Not the mass of the outcast Jews, for they never pretended to honour our Christ. They are persons who made some profession of waiting for the Bridegroom. That *lamp* was to do honour to Him. These, therefore, are persons who knew their Lord's will and did it not. It is a passage that seems to be intended for a community where Christ is preached, and where opportunities of knowing

place till all opportunities of salvation granted to mankind will for ever close." (P. 69.) Mr. Brown too, page 82, says, that it "is explicitly revealed that this is the last dispensation of grace to man." Neither of these statements is proved.

Him are given. We might gather, perhaps, from the Apocalypse, that the whole ten kingdoms—all Christendom—shall be peculiarly in this state, and shall be peculiarly the scene of the shutting door, though the same shall occur wherever Christ was preached before. O hypocritical worshipper, O carnal liver, O professor of the faith, who art living at ease in Zion, O sinner unsaved under the sound of the Gospel, it is "*Now or never*" with thee. Thy day of grace shall end in black midnight then. They who enjoyed a day of grace before, shall not hear one note of the silver trumpet in that day.

IV. It is alleged against us that we *quite destroy the deep solemnity of the general judgment, by representing the saints as acquitted at the opening of the thousand years, and only the wicked as appearing at the great white throne.* We are referred by such objectors to Matt. xxv. 31—46 for a refutation of our views.

We do not enter here on this topic at any length. But meanwhile we reply, that the common idea of one unbroken general judgment-day is a partial representation of the transactions of that mysteriously solemn day of God. But even admitting it were correct, we say that the passage in Matthew xxv. 31—46 is parabolical in many of its details, and

can no more be alleged as deciding *the time and order* of events than can vers. 14—30, where the persons judged are represented as coming forward *one by one*. How can you reconcile this *one by one*, with the next view of *all at once*? Only by admitting that these are not *chronological prophecies*, but are meant simply to exhibit the *Person* who shall decide, *and the principles* of decision on that day. It is in this the same with John v. 29. There is not one *chronological element* in either case.

For my own part I would add farther,* that I conceive that it is very likely there shall be a meeting at *the Great White Throne* which shall be truly universal. We lose nothing of the advantage supposed to be found in this idea. There shall be a *General Judgment* after the Millennium. There shall be resurrection of the wicked; and how immense the multitude, small and great, that arise and come to judgment! But besides these endless millions of the ungodly, there are present the happy millions of the saved, in their white robes, and with their crowns. They are there as assessors with their Lord. For now is the season when that word shall be fulfilled, "*Do ye not know that the*

* Mr. Brown, p. 368, will see that it is possible on Pre-millennial principles to take another view of the judgment than that which he sets himself to refute.

saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. vi. 2.)
"*Know ye not that we shall judge angels?"* (Ver. 3.)

In that solemn hour the Judge may begin with declaring before all that assembly his just sentence on Satan that deceived the whole world ; for, perhaps, as the *serpent* was first sentenced in Eden, so on that day he first shall be cast into the lake of fire. But it is every way likely, too, that on that day, Satan and every lost soul of all these millions shall hear from the lips of the Judge the grounds on which he acquitted each one of his redeemed. They shall be witnesses of the perfect holiness of all his ways. O what glorious discoveries shall then be made of the Lord's sovereign love and righteous law ! How intense the awe of a universe hushed into breathless silence by Him before whom every knee now bows ! How overwhelming to the ungodly shall be the Lord's manifestation of their ingratitude, hatred, malignity, baseness, in contrast to his tender calls and entreaties, his compassionate love, his yearning bowels, his amazing gift of salvation, all which they so madly and irretrievably rejected ! And when these two companies, on that day, have at last uttered their "Amen," like Ebal and Gerizzim re-echoing to the blessing and the curse, O who can once conceive the tremendous moment when they look their last farewell on each other, and

from the left hand see "Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and they themselves shut out!" O, my soul, come not thou into their secret! O my soul, bless the Lord that thou mayest on that day be safe in the righteousness of the Judge of all, when the smoke of the everlasting burnings shall suggest rapturous hallelujahs, and the glories of redemption be reflected from the dark background of an eternal hell.

CHAPTER IX.

SHOULD WE CARE TO KNOW THE TIME WHEN THE LORD'S COMING SHALL BE ?

WE believe that a man would require to be little less than inspired, ere ever he could assuredly say that *the Lord will not come before the thousand years*. Our master evidently wished us to be left in such circumstances as that never should any one be able to say, "I need not watch for him yet ; centuries are between me and him." IN SUCH AN HOUR AS YE THINK NOT, THE SON OF MAN COMETH. "Some of you will say," says Mr. M'Cheyne,* "'Surely we shall have some guess of the time of His Coming ?' Now, if there be one thing plainer than another, it is that you know neither the day, nor the hour ; 'In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.' If I were to go round you all and say, 'Do you think the Son of Man will come to-night ?' you would all say, 'I think not.' Well, just in such an hour he will come."

* Sermons and Lectures, page 450.

The same man of God, whose memory is so fragrant in our land, says again,* "I am far from discouraging those who with humble prayerfulness search into the records of prophecy to find out what God has said as to the Second Coming of the Son of Man. We are not like the first disciples if we do not often put the question, 'What shall be the sign of thy Coming, and of the end of the world?' But the truth which I wish to be written on your hearts is this ; that the Coming shall be sudden—sudden to the world—sudden to the children of God. IN SUCH AN HOUR AS YE THINK NOT THE SON OF MAN COMETH. YE KNOW NOT WHEN THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE COMETH, AT EVEN, OR AT MIDNIGHT, OR AT COCK CROWING, OR IN THE MORNING. O, my friends, your faith is incomplete if you do not live in the daily faith of a coming Saviour."

And yet there are some who hesitate not to advance the proposition that for a man to live in this state of expectancy, in the belief that that day may come upon us ere we lie down in the dust of the grave, is little less than fanaticism ! We confess that to say that the Lord WILL come this year, or within the next ten years, would be something like fanaticism ; for Scripture no where reveals the period ; but to say that he MAY come within that

* Sermons and Lectures, page 240.

period is no more than honouring the Divine Word, which tells us, "Behold, I come as a thief."

A recent writer, whom we have already often referred to, has fallen into a singular error on this head. He is explaining 2 Thess. ii. 1—3, "Now, we beseech you, brethren, by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that *the day of Christ is at hand*. Let no man deceive you by any means ; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

Paul was led by the Holy Ghost to write thus in order to counteract the working of some individuals in Thessalonica, who had begun to teach that "the day of Christ *was already present*." This is the genuine force of the word rendered in our version "*is at hand*." They said, "It is already dawning ; it is already *set in*." The term used is *ἐνεστηκεν*, which occurs Rom. viii. 38, "*ἐνεστωτα*," in contrast to "things to come ;" and in 1 Cor. vii. 26, to express "the present (*ἐνεστωσαν*) necessity." And so 2 Tim. iii. 1, "In the last days, perilous times shall come," *ἐνεστησονται*, shall be found setting in upon the earth as a rising tide. Bretschneider defines the word, "*Quasi in conspectu jam sto, seu versor*."

Some in Thessalonica taught that the day of Christ had begun. This was not true, and therefore Paul wrote against this view. It is not so, says he ; there are none of the streaks of dawn yet. The watcher upon the hill top, who, in the days of our fathers kept his eye on the outlook for the approach of the anticipated foe, if he saw the assembled congregation in the glen ready to run to and fro because some one had given a false alarm, would cry out, "No, no ; he is not come ; it will be time enough to be alarmed when he is really at hand ; but he is not yet at hand, and ere he comes close on us there is a hill he must come over, and there his banner will be plainly seen." Is he by saying this hinting that they were quite wrong in expecting any sudden appearance of the foe ?

Yet it has been said that Paul here "*set himself to beat down* the Premillennial expectation, in so far as it teaches that Christ may come *any day!*" Now, in point of fact, this passage contains nothing whatever on that head. It does not apply to it. The object of it is to warn the Thessalonians against the belief that it was already begun. "*Lo ! Christ is here ! or, lo ! he is there !*" (Matthew xxiv. 23.) Our Lord's prophecy of false prophets coming and proclaiming, "Behold, he is in the desert," &c., had found verification among these newly gathered saints.

It might far more reasonably have been objected, "*Why does Paul not at once say, Well, even if so, that day is to be longed for, not to be dreaded?*" There is reason in this ; for at first view his words seem to yield an argument against *the desirableness* of the Lord's Coming, though they yield none at all against our daily expectation of it. But the reply is obviously this. Paul is content here with saying, "The thing that alarms, viz., '*Lo ! Christ is here,*' is not true ;" while he might have said in addition "Even were it true, there is no need for alarm." So might the watcher on the hill top have said in calming any false alarm. The circumstances attending a false alarm are always excitement and fear ; but the accompaniments of the real Coming will be such as require nothing to be said as to "being shaken." He does not think it necessary to advert to what should be their feelings in prospect of the real Coming, well knowing that then they would be found in peace.

An unfortunate criticism has been advanced on the strength of the above noticed view, which we have been refuting, to this effect—that this passage is a key to some others, shewing that they were "not to be understood in point of chronological date, for in that sense it is expressly intimated here that *He is not at hand.*"* Now, we have

* Mr. Brown, pp. 36, 37.

seen that it only intimates that his Coming was not "*then imminent*." Yonder singular phenomena are not the clouds on which He is actually to be seen appearing. But this is all it means; and it throws no light on the other passages alluded to, which are Phil. iv. 5, Rom. xiii. 12, 1 Pet. iv. 7; the truth is, the word in the original is *not the same in any one of these* passages. In Phil. iv. 5, it is "the Lord is 'ἔγγυς,' near." In Rom. xiii. 12 it is, "the day 'ἥγγυκε,' draws near." And in 1 Pet. iv. 7, "the end of all things 'ἥγγυκε,' draws near." He might have taken James v. 8, "the Coming of the Lord 'ἥγγυκε,' draweth nigh," as parallel to these three, for there the same term is used: but in *none* of them is the word "ἐνεστήκε" employed. And is not this variation employed because that word in 2 Thess. ii. 2 had a sense really and specifically different from the term used in the other places? * If not, then Paul, in Rom. xiii. 12, raises the very error he is said here to combat, by proclaiming "The day is at hand;" and the other Apostles already quoted would be found contradicting Paul's warning to Thessalonica.

But, building on this foundation, which we find is sandy after all, it is asserted that Paul saw

* Beza thus comments on it, "Atqui dicitur, dies Domini ἥγγυκεναι. (James v. 8.) 1 Pet. iv. 7, Fateor; sed qui dicit instare, multo certius aliquid definit, et quasi tempus præfigit."

"*peculiar evils in the notion of the Advent being near.*" We deny this. He says not a word on this subject. What he saw evil in was the notion that it *was already come*,—"Lo! here is Christ!" But where is there anything to justify a man boldly going on to assert that Paul sought systematically to shew its *distance* in point of chronology? I know not a shadow of proof for this. And where is it that we find him "throwing *the Advent into the distant future?*" And yet this is asserted, and all as an inference from a passage which we now discover to be misinterpreted!

Following up this erroneous view, however, it is maintained that faith pays no regard to the chronological element. Nor do we say it does, where the question refers merely to the certainty. But it is going very far against the principles of our nature to tell us that faith says, "Make haste, beloved, **ALIKE** when chronologically far off and when chronologically near!" We say this is a caricature of faith; and not less is it so to speak of faith shewing "*a holy defiance of mere dates!*"* Can it possibly

* Mr. Brown, pp. 40, 41. Will many be found to subscribe to the following experience of Sir T. Browne, though it is no more than a parallel to the above, "I bless myself and am thankful that I lived not in the days of miracles; that I never saw Christ, nor his disciples. I would not have been one of those Israelites that passed the Red Sea, nor one of Christ's patients on whom He wrought his wonders. Then

be otherwise than that faith should be greatly helped and strengthened by nearness? Will it be said that Noah was equally vivid in his realizations of the world's danger at the beginning of the hundred and twenty years' day of grace, as when it drew on to its last day? And are men to be spoken of as having a "fanatical and excited expectation," because they find it more according to the principles of human thought and belief to realize better a thing that is near, than a thing that is a thousand years away?

I can exercise faith in the certainty of an event far distant. But can I so well realize and use that event as if it were near? Faith to feed on the event is what I want. Faith passes over the interval of time between it and its hoped-for enjoyment, and does in reality regard the thing as near. It seeks to have its objects before it—present with it. But can it succeed in this exercise as well with an object that is a thousand years away, as with one that seems just emerging into view? Does it not feel helped by advantageous position? I believe in the humanity of an *unseen* Immanuel; but shall I not feel my belief in it, my confidence

had my faith been thrust upon me: nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that believe and saw not." (Religio Med. 9.) He adds, "They only had the advantage of a *bold* and *noble* faith" who "expect apparent impossibilities."

in it, amazingly cleared, when *I see* that living person face to face? Even so, I may easily assent to the fact, the bare fact, of the Second Coming with a thousand years' interval yet to run on ere it arrives; but if it seems very near I can much more easily enter into its influence and feel it as a motive. It is *not impossible* to do so, in the former case, but it is *difficult*, even for men taught of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit acts on us without changing the principles and faculties of our nature. And if the *nearness* of death affects us more than the mere *certainty* of dying within a century; so will the *nearness* of the Lord's Coming influence us more than the mere certainty of his Appearing within some thousand years.

It may be argued that the element of distance *ought* to have no effect in abating our desire and watchfulness; but men feel, that, say what you will, an object near has more in it to move them, than an object distant. This is common sense. Not that we say it is impossible for men of strong faith thus to overcome so formidable an obstacle; but it is so difficult, so unnatural, (we might say,) to do so, that few indeed have the tendency to look and watch and hasten unto the Coming of the day of God, except those who have no certainty but that it may come speedily. "Is it possible," says Durham, in a Sermon on Rev. xxii. 20, "if Christ's

Coming were believed, and your interest in it, but your soul would cry out, 'When shall the day dawn? When shall He rend these heavens and come down?' There would be *a holy impatience at the misgiving of anything ye thought might lengthen his stay.*"

If, then, we can shew that the day of the Lord is *near*, that is, that it is *on this side the Millennium*, we stand upon high vantage ground for pressing upon our fellow-men this great doctrine. In our own mind we have little doubt that the belief of its being *on the other side of the Millennium* was the very circumstance that naturally led believers to cease "looking for and hastening to it."* And if so, we gain something if we can show that no living man can adduce proof of its being at the close of the Millennium; while we can adduce proof that leads to expect it ere those thousand years of blessedness begin.

This is one view of the importance of knowing something regarding the time of the Lord's Coming. Leaving untouched the subject of dates, and without even a wish to know "the day and the hour," let us advance into the inquiry which may place us full in front of a Coming Lord. If they are right who assert that the early Christians—many

* Is not this more than implied in Matt. xxv. 5, "*While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept?*"

of them at least—in apostolic days, saw the long, long interval that was to elapse between them and their Lord's return, and yet were able to "*haste unto it*," then we say, they must have had peculiarly strong faith to be able to overcome the tendency of our nature, even when renewed, to overlook a very distant object. But be this as it may, we leave it untouched, satisfied that if we can prove that we, in these later ages, have no certainty of any such long interval, then we have proved ourselves to be possessed of an advantage which the earlier believers possessed not. And if this advantage be in our hands, shall we throw it away?*

We need everything to arouse us, and keep us from slumber! O, that we were truly found as Passover-men, our staff in our hand, our loins girt, our shoes on, eating of the Lamb "*with haste*,"† as men who are soon to journey on to a king-

* See more on this topic in "Affirmative Answer to the Question, 'Will the Second Advent be Premillennial?'" By Rev. Walter Wood, Minister of Free Church, Elie.

† It is turning aside to remark here on Psalm cxvi. 11, but the interest of the passage leads me to notice it. Our Lord is the speaker, and he shows us the true pilgrim-spirit in ver. 9—12, "I will walk before God in the land of the living. I say this confidently, for I have leant on the Lord, and believed his faithful sayings. I was greatly afflicted. I sought consolation, but found it not anywhere on earth. I

dom. We need everything in this age of intense earthliness to keep us loose from the world. Whatever be the other results of these pages, may the Holy Spirit cause every reader to arise from their perusal with his eye solemnly resting on a Coming Lord, earth beneath his feet, and his affections on Him who is at the right hand of God!

A man of God once said to a fellow-traveller, "Perhaps it is well for you who enjoy constant health to be so firmly persuaded that Christ's Coming is Premillennial." He saw that this expectation girds up the loins. Present health may seem to assure its possessor that there is some distance between him and death; but it never can even seem to assure him that the Lord is not at hand. But it is often felt equally bracing to the sick and dying. I have visited God's children in pain and sore sickness, who have said that they felt nothing to draw out their desire in death itself, but everything to gladden in the Lord's appearing. Is it not because "*Jesus himself*" is the

passed through earth as a Passover-man, in *haste* (חֲפָזָה as in Exod. xii. 12, and Psalm xxxi. 22). I said, 'All men are liars;' all disappoint me; not one yields me comfort. But I turned to the Lord alone; and what shall I render to Him for all his benefits? I will for ever rejoice in his cup of salvation; his love poured out on me; and holding up this shall evermore praise his name. This is my satisfying consolation."

essence of this blessed hope, and the prospect before us is as Job xix. 26, that we "*in our flesh,*"—not as disembodied spirits, but as true and perfect men, body and spirit—shall see Him as He is?

And may we not say to *mourners* that the prospect of the *nearness* of the day of Christ is full of comfort to them. Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. And if *the Lord be near*, the time of re-union may not be far off. They that lie down at evening have a whole night's slumber before them; but they who lie down towards morning have, it may be, but an hour or less till the dawn awakes them. So with the dead in Christ in these last days. They will not have long to sleep, for it is now the fourth watch of the night, and the day-star is preparing to arise. What consolation! How it soothes the pain of parting! How it cheers the wounded spirit! "'Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust,' is now our watchword every day. We take our stand upon our watch-tower and look out amidst the darkness of night for the first streaks of morn. We lay our ear to the ground and listen, that amid all the discord of earth, the uproar of war, the tumults of the nations, we may catch the first sound of our Lord's chariot-wheels—those chariot-wheels that are to sweep in vengeance over the field of Armageddon, crushing the confederate nations

leagued against the Lord and his Anointed, and also to bring to the bosom of the long-betrothed Bride, the husband of her youth, the desire of her soul; for whom, amid tears and loneliness, she has waited for many a generation, many a century, in vain."*

* "Night of Weeping," p. 202.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT THE SCRIPTURES TEACH US TO EXPECT
WILL BE THE STATE OF THE WORLD UNTIL
THE COMING OF THE LORD.

PROPHECY is now in such a state of fulfilment that there is no event whatever remaining to be accomplished of which we could positively say, "That event must yet occur before the Son of man appears."* We are living in an age of the world when every hill is passed up which the Church had

* "We are differently situated now from the disciples in the apostolic age. They were told that the Coming of the Lord would not take place until the Man of Sin was revealed. That was an event that must happen first, and it is the only event that is there mentioned as necessarily intervening betwixt the First and Second Coming of the Saviour. And if Antichrist has appeared—if the Man of Sin has been revealed—then there is no part of Scripture that gives any assurance that the Son of man may not very soon appear. Oh! to be ready, having our loins girt about, and our lights burning as servants waiting for the Coming of the Lord." ("Warning against Popery," p. 25. By James Buchanan, D. D., Edinburgh.)

to climb ere it came in full sight of the plain along which shall come the Son of man in his chariot of glory in an hour when we think not.

If we could imagine the scene that was witnessed on the evening of that day when Jesus finished preaching to the multitudes and sent them away, we might, perhaps, find in it a representation of the state in which the family of Christ are at present throughout this land. We have had Jesus preached to young and old, in a season of summer, sunshine, and calm; for such has been our day of grace. It is now approaching to evening: thousands that have heard the word, and handled the bread, are going homeward unsaved, though somewhat convinced. The few disciples are left by their Lord alone: He is meantime away on yonder hill, praying the Father for them. These few disciples are at the sea-side, about to embark on its waters. Some of them imagine they shall sail over to the other side in complete peace, with only a little darkness, and that the Master will continue on that hill of frankincense, interceding for them till they are safely landed. But there are others of them who think they see unusual blackness in the sky, and that they can hear a moan from the hills that forebodes a rising storm; but they embark, only wishing and praying earnestly that the Master may not

delay coming to join them, and encouraged by some hints to this effect which they treasure up in their heart.

These last are the representatives of those who in our day anticipate tribulation for the Church and world, and no remedy till the Lord comes. Soon we expect the storm will burst in tremendous fury, till even in the Church it be said, "They could not well strengthen the mast; they could not spread the sail," the sea and its waves roaring, and men's hearts failing them for fear. But just then, in the darkest watch of the night, the Lord leaves his place at the right hand, and comes to our help. The sound of his voice, and the mere glance of his coming form, increases the alarm of some of his own;—but in the twinkling of an eye He is with us, saying, "It is I," to his beloved ones, and "Peace," to the tempest that sought to dash its waves over their shattered bark. When darkness is waxed yet grosser still, and all help gone, in that hour when men think not, the Son of Man cometh!

Some of the following chapters will bring forward more fully the testimony of the word on this subject. But for the sake of fixing the attention, and guiding the eye of the reader, it is desirable here to state the points of wide difference between us and those who do not expect Christ

before the Millennium, in respect to *the prospects of the Church and the world.*

We might use the words of a great thinker* in stating the sum of our expectations. "Man's pride so obstinately ascribes to himself whatever good is effected on this globe, that, perhaps, the Deity will evince his own interposition by *events as evidently independent of the might of man as the rising of the sun.*"

The word seems to declare that the Church shall be as a widow till the Second Coming of the Lord. This is the image used by the Bridegroom himself in Luke xviii. 2—8. And there he asks, "*When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*" Instead of the whole world being converted before He comes, instead of there being only a very small minority who have not received his testimony, instead of the spectacle of nations and kingdoms and tongues waiting to welcome the Coming King with joy and gratulation, the word says that the number who shall be expecting God's answer to his elect's cries shall be so few, that, compared with the world's hundreds of millions, they shall seem as if none at all!

The word seems to declare that at that time the smallness of the number of the godly, in the midst

* Foster, on the Application of the Epithet Romantic, Lett. v.

of a fully-peopled earth, shall bring vividly to mind the one man, Noah, and his family entering the ark, or the one Lot fleeing out of Sodom. This is declared by the Lord in Luke xvii. 26, 28. Where is the brimful world of believers? Is it not a dream?

The word seems to hold out no prospect of rest to the true Church of Christ till the Second Coming of the Lord. When Paul refers to trials and open persecutions, to sufferings and tribulations at the hands of powerful foes, he hints at no prospect of this state ending till the Lord appears. "*It is a righteous thing with God to recompense—to you who are troubled rest with us* (ἀνταποδοῦναι . . . ἀνεσθαι μεθ' ἡμῶν);" to give you and us together rest at last from our sore adversities. But when? "*When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire.*" (2 Thess. i. 7.) No Millennial days of peace before the Lord himself has come!* No sheathing of the oppressor's sword! No quenching of the furnace of fury breathing out its smoke and fire against the followers of the Lamb! Probably, these days may witness tribulation of a new kind; suffering unto death has even in our day been required of some;

* *Zanchius ad loc.* thus writes, "Hæc est enim conditio ecclesiæ ut semper sub cruce maneat usque ad alterum Adventum Domini nostri Jesu Christi."

and exile of others ; and bonds and imprisonment of others. Antichrist has attacked the quiet seats of peaceful islanders. Satan has great wrath until he is bound, and will, no doubt, invent many new forms of severe trial, as well as call in the aid of the old, when his opportunity occurs. This is the scriptural prospect before us onward to the day of the Lord's Coming. Dr. Arnold, whose sagacious mind saw what the signs of the times portended, writes in one of his letters, "My sense of the evils of the times, and to what prospects I am bringing up my children, is overwhelmingly bitter. . . . Times are coming wherein the devil will fight his best in good earnest."

The *word seems to declare* that instead of Heathen darkness being dispelled before the Lord's Coming, it shall be at that moment gross as Egypt's judgment-gloom. It is, perhaps, to this that Isa. lxiii. 5 refers, "*I looked and there was none to help.*" And it is to this that ch. xxv. 7 refers ; "He will destroy the *face of the covering cast over all people*, and the vail that is *spread over all nations.*" This he does at the very time when he comes to "swallow up death" (v. 8), but not before.

The *word seems to declare* that till "the Redeemer come to Zion" (Isa. lix. 20), the remnant gathered from Israel shall be only the "*election of grace.*" There is not to be any national turning

of Israel to the Lord till that day. But *at that day* "the land shall mourn, every family apart." (Zech. xii. 12.) It is then that "*all Israel shall be saved*, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob." (Rom. xi. 26.) The times of the Gentiles are not fulfilled, and of course therefore, "the fulness of the Gentiles" does not come in (Rom. xi. 25) until we arrive at the day when there shall be "*signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity . . . and then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*" (Luke xxi. 25, 27.)

The word seems to declare that up till the hour when the flash of the lightning that proclaims the Lord shall lighten up earth with its brightness, *the Man of Sin* shall hold dominion. He shall be "*revealing*" himself more and more in awful variety of subtlety, and violence, and fascination, till arrested by that sudden Advent. See 2 Thess. ii. 8, and Rev. xix. 20, compared with vers. 11—16. Read the plain testimonies and ponder. The passages in which they are set forth are here only pointed out. They are afterwards to be more fully illustrated.

The word seems to declare that the miseries of this earth shall not have any relief till that day. This blessing is reserved for the hour that "mani-

feasts the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 19—23), the hour of resurrection, when we shall be like our Lord, seeing Him as he is. Till then, there is no hope left us of seeing "the door of the world's great hospital" closed; it will till then remain a very lazaret-house, wherein, in every room, in every region, you find

"all maladies
 Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
 Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
 Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
 Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
 Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,
 And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
 Marasmas, and wide-wasting pestilence,
 Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums."

O that "the healer of all thy diseases" were come, thou sin-struck blighted earth!

The word seems to declare that, till the Lord come, we may look for a continual increase of the forms of evil, while it says nothing of any new forms of godliness in these last days. The word says much of the new shapes and aspects of evil. Thus, we are warned of the *three unclean spirits, like frogs, which go forth unto the kings of the earth* and OF THE WHOLE WORLD, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." (Rev. xvi. 14.) And, therefore, close upon the back of this, is given forth to us that solemn, startling cry,

"Behold, I come as a thief! Blessed is he that watcheth." We are elsewhere told that these last days are to be peculiarly "*perilous times*," full of every evil, and yet "*having the form of godliness*." (2 Tim. iii. 5.) Satan setting his snares, and throwing his net, for the last time,* will no doubt create a time of unprecedented danger, to both Church and world, according as it is written; "*There shall arise false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, in so much that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*" (Matt. xxiv. 24.) It is enough to make us start to our feet, and grasp every weapon in the armoury, to read such warnings of what is to be in these days—days of which it is added, "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened . . . and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven!*"

The word seems to declare that the preaching of the Gospel onward to that day is in order to gather out a few from every country and tongue, but not to convert whole nations. The object and design of the preaching of the Gospel seems expressed in Matt. xxiv. 14. "This Gospel of the kingdom shall

* What a tremendous foe is Satan, though so little felt or feared! Is not this a true description of him—" *Vires omne nefas animo moventes*," given unwittingly by a Heathen poet? (Horat. b. iii., ode iv.)

be preached in all the world *for a witness unto all nations*, and then shall the end come.”* We ought to expect *some* success in *every* place where the word of salvation is truly proclaimed. “Thanks be unto God who always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.” (2 Cor. ii. 14.) But in no place are we entitled to expect at present more than the conversion of *some*—the remnant according to the election of grace. It is not till the Lord comes that any promise of *national* conversion has place. And the state of the world corresponds to this expectation. The efforts of missionaries are blessed to gather out some of the elect ; but when, as in Tahiti, it might seem as if a whole region would turn to the Lord, lo ! the boar out of the forest ! And as for the national religion of our Protestant land, the more it is tested, the less satisfaction it affords to him that tests it. O our cities and even villages ! what are they, amid knowledge “*running to and fro*” among them, but hotbeds of ungodliness ? You find vice, infidelity, and error, side by side with selfishness, covetousness, and pleasure. Are they not like steaming cauldrons, sending forth

* Some make Dan. xii. 4, “ Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased,” apply to the amazing progress of science and inventions in the last days. It may, however, be parallel to this passage.

their impure and noisome vapour? Where is the sweet incense breathed from a community of believing souls?

But we might have looked for this, for Rev. xi. 15 proclaims no turning of the nations to the Lord *until the seventh angel* sounds his trumpet; and THEN the great voices in heaven are heard saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."

None will more heartily aid in any missionary undertaking than Scripture Premillennialists. They believe that the Lord's peculiar wish at present is, to gather out some from every nation. But, in seeking this end, it is surely right for us to cherish those expectations only which the Lord authorizes us to cherish. We sometimes find Premillennialists accused of exciting a false, unauthorized kind of watchfulness, by urging the hope of the Lord's speedy Coming, when they know not, nevertheless, if it shall be in our day. But in so urging this hope we have Scripture warrant, whatever may seem the inconsistencies. On the other hand, we might charge those that deny the Premillennial Coming, with exciting, fostering, and incessantly proclaiming a most delusive expectation. They have led themselves and others to expect that, *at this present time*, in this dispensation that precedes

the Lord's Coming, the preaching of the Gospel is to be followed up with national conversions, or, at least, conversions and reformation in the dense masses of the world's population. And thus they have undervalued * the self-denying labours of the missionary among Jew and Gentile, unless his labours are crowned with considerable success. They have not shared with the labourer in his trials, not sympathized with his patient faith,—but have sought and demanded the excitement of ever-occurring success of some brilliant kind. So far is such a visionary hope from aiding missionaries, that, on the contrary, we have heard such labourers regret deeply that the Church at home should be dazzled by the vain hope of conversions on a grand scale, as it led her away from sympathy in their watchings and prayers and cross-bearing. The missionary himself, who sees that the gathering out of the elect is his sole hope, works far more in simple faith, and is far less disheartened by opposition, than when he vainly expected every day to see symptoms of national and universal conversion. Our rule as to effort must still be, “SO MUCH THE

* Dr. Urwick reproaches our views with hindering missionary exertion; “Indeed, it is Satan's device thereby to alienate, at least, *some* hearts and energies.” We reply, that *the other view* has done far more to withhold sympathy from missionaries who see little fruit, and thus has deeply injured the cause of missions.

MORE, *as ye see the day approaching.*" (Heb. x. 25.) It would be wrong, grievously wrong, to say that *the Gospel* is not *the instrument* in the Lord's hand for converting the world ; but equally wrong is it to say, that the Lord is so to use it at present. It will always be the one instrument in the Spirit's hand. But, at present, our part is to proclaim it faithfully for the gathering out of the few elect.* We are to be content with the results which the Lord may send, while we long for more. We are to stand in Timothy's position, "*keeping this commandment unrebukeable,*"—proclaiming the Word of Life to a perishing world, even as Jesus did at Pilate's bar,—"*until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ* : which the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords ; the only possessor of immortality, the dweller in the light that no man can approach unto ; whom no man hath seen or can see, shall in due time † shew." (1 Tim.

* Men have calculated how long it would take to convert the eight hundred millions of our earth, and have shown how, by a process of accumulation, all might easily be done in thirteen years, if *five* were each to convert other five the first year, and these twenty-five each to convert five next year, and so forth. *But is this the Lord's purpose ?*

† As the First Coming is said to have been "*καίρως ἰδίοις*" (1 Tim. ii. 6), so the Second Coming is here spoken of in the same terms. The time is kept secret in the Father's purposes. But we are not to weary in waiting ; it will come "in due

vi. 14, 15.) Let us be like the four captains of the Prince engaged against the town of Mansoul, who were fain to petition for "*More force*," and were *answered, at length, by the arrival of the Prince Immanuel himself in their camp!*

The fuller proof of many of these points is yet to be adduced : but, meanwhile, how solemn is the view it opens up ! Our horizon, dark enough already, is threatened with denser clouds, fearfully ominous of unparalleled storms ! The world has rejected the Son of God, the gift of his richest love ; it has seen God open his very heart for the return of sinners, and has laughed this grace to scorn. And now what is nigh at hand, ready to burst over a dreaming world ? "The tempest-cloud of heaven's judgment, the filling up of God's wrath, the last vial already trembling in the angel's hand ! Instead, then, of that soothing sound of a world regenerated by the arts and agencies of man, the cry that should be everywhere raised throughout her borders, should be that slumber-breaking, soul-startling cry that was once heard in the streets of Nineveh, '*Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.*' And standing under the very edge of that ever-darkening, ever-descending cloud, time." And when it comes, it will be worthy of Him that brings it,—a day of glory worthy of that Jehovah who is here described.

—every new event in these eventful times startling us as if it were the gleam of the quivering lightning, —every rumour among the nations sounding in our ears like the mutter of the distant thunder,—we should point first, forward to the ‘wrath that is to come’ —that is, *almost come*,—then backward to the cross as a guilty world’s only hope, and cry as one that wished to awake the dead, ‘Flee to the covert! Haste to the only refuge! Tarry not in all the plain!’”*

Men and brethren, let us gird up our loins! This day is a day of trouble and rebuke and blasphemy; and the prospect has nothing in it that is cheering. Satan has great wrath; his hosts have great strength; the love of many in our King’s camp is waxing cold; new alarms are ever startling us; and events give forebodings of new suffering and woe to the earth. “But, beloved, remember ye the words that were spoken before by the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Jude 17.) “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming?” (2 Peter iii. 3.) Amid all this, cling to Christ alone. “Hold fast the beginning of your confidence stedfast to the end.” It may be, in the twinkling of an eye, we

* Rev. Jo. Purves, Jedburgh, in No. 3 of “Tracts on Prophecy,” published by Kennedy, Edinburgh.

shall be with him ; for, "Behold, I come as a thief," is his cry under the sixth vial. In a moment He may have come, pitching his tabernacle among men, and shining forth earth's visible King. The eye that glances over these pages may yet be fixed in amazement on the sign of the Son of man in the clouds. The ears that are now tingling with rumours of wars, and with distant notices of pestilence, and the harrowing details of famine, may soon hear the roar of a storm that bursts in fury on a hundred shores, and the blast of the trumpet that announces to the world, "*It is done!*"

CHAPTER XI.

PROOF THAT THE SECOND ADVENT IS PRE-MILLENNIAL. ISAIAH'S PROPHECY, CHAPTERS XXIV., XXV.

“He that does not really desire and long for that day, either is in a very ill condition, or does not understand that he is in a good.” Jeremy Taylor thus speaks in his sermon on the Advent; and, if he be right, we might expect, that the hope of this longed-for Lord coming soon—coming before the Millennium—would be a hope that engaged Christian prejudice in its favour. In point of fact, however, the case is not so; whether it be that circumstances have led many to connect error with this Blessed Hope, or that a cold love to the Lord himself has turned the heart away from the eager desire of his speedy Coming.

Were we writing for readers whose prejudices were enlisted in favour of the Premillennial view by their ardent desires, we should feel persuaded that little else was needed to produce conviction

than the calm perusal of such passages as we are now to adduce. And even though we are well aware that we are encountering minds of a very different tendency, we feel that such passages as these are the best of all arguments. Let them be calmly perused, and the whole context too,—let them be prayerfully examined,—let *the word* dictate, and not philosophizing intellect,—and then we doubt not but the reader, as he peruses the simple text, will feel as the Jew did who said, “*How to understand is easy enough, but how not to understand is the difficulty.*”*

We proceed, therefore, to take a few specimens, which to us appear so plain, that the difficulty is not to understand them; and we give the whole context, because the force of the argument is very much lessened by viewing texts out of their connexion. They occur in such a position, that if you would remove the literal and obvious meaning, you are made by the context to feel that you disjoint and rend the whole piece. We begin with a passage that exhibits Israel's history from the treading down of Jerusalem to the Coming of the Lord.

ISAIAH XXIV., XXV.

1. *Behold, the Lord maketh the earth (the land) empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside*

* “Narrative of Mission to the Jews,” chapter iv.

down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. 2. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. 3. The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word.

Notice at the outset the clause, "*turneth upside down.*" It may be rendered, *alters the face of it*—quite changes its aspect. How descriptive of a land turned from fertility to barrenness!

Here is the prediction of that desolation which our eyes have seen accomplished. Israel's once happy land, densely peopled, and smiling with abundance in its valleys and hills, has undergone the sad reverse here foretold. Volney* testified that innumerable monuments depose in favour of the ancient population having been very great; such as the prodigious quantity of ruins dispersed over the plains, and even in the mountains. It is now so amazingly depopulated, that the same writer's astonishment was excited at finding in it so few people of any class. A country that nourished from four to seven millions of souls has now not more than an hundred thousand. And this number

* Keith's "Evidence of Prophecy," pp. 108, 142.

is reduced to a tenth, if we consider that the prophet speaks of *the men of Israel*. So empty is it of these, that our deputation from Scotland, who visited the land in 1839, could write on the spot, after coming up from Egypt to the vicinity of Jerusalem, "We have not as yet met a single child of Abraham in their own land,"* and could hear of no more than twelve thousand Jews at the utmost in the whole of Palestine. The rest are "*scattered abroad*" in every land under heaven ! So true is the word spoken. As ver. 2 predicted, the calamity spared no class—all were involved in the same ruin ; and (ver. 3) "*the land is utterly emptied.*" It is even emptied of its fruits and its produce. "*It is utterly spoiled*" also. The Romans made it their prey ; and, as their legions poured along its highways, Israel began to be emphatically (as described in chap. xviii. 2), "A people whose land rivers have spoiled." Volney describes the floods that have swept through it ; "The Arabian tribes under the banner of Mahomet seized it, or rather laid it waste. Since that period, torn by the civil wars of the Fatimites and Ommiades, wrested from the caliphs by their rebellious governors, taken from them by the Turkish soldiery, invaded by European Crusaders, retaken by the Mamelouks of Egypt, ravaged by Tamerlane and his Tartars, it has fallen at length

* Narrative, pp. 118, 164.

into the hands of the Ottoman Turks." And since then, other torrents have rushed along its surface to leave it spoiled yet more. Napoleon and Mehemet Ali have had their share, and the Bedouin Arab has never withdrawn his hand from its fields. If ever there was a people of whose land it could be said, "*Utterly spoiled*," it is Israel—they and their country utterly wasted and made a prey. The Lord's love is always deliberate and decided; but so also is his wrath. Woe to the man that is a child of wrath in the day of the Lord!

"4. *The earth* (the land) *mourneth and fadeth away, the world* (the inhabitants or population*) *languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth* (land) *do languish*. 5. *The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof: because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant*. 6. *Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth* (land), *and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore the inhabitants of the earth* (land) *are burned, and few men left*."

The prophet, under the implied figure of a widow mourning over her bereavement, paints the sad desolation of both the land and the people. Tra-

* *תִּבְלָה* means *inhabited land*. When contrasted with *אֲדָמָה* it is the *people*, in contradistinction to the soil on which they are nourished. Hence, Prov. viii. 31, *תִּבְלָה אֲדָמָה*. So Psalm xc. 2.

velling through its coasts, the Deputation from Scotland describe one of its most frequented routes as now "lonely and still, except when shepherds and their flocks passed by." (P. 101.) And I well remember how frequently we felt through every part, and not least at Jerusalem, and by the shores of the Lake of Galilee, that the land was like a house left desolate, where once all had been prosperity and joy. "It *mourneth and fadeth away*." Carmel's top is withered ; the plain of Tabor, to the extent of three hundred square miles, is a solitude, whose fine black mould is hid by thistles of prodigious growth. "From Khan-Leban (Lebonah) to Beer," says a traveller, "the country presents nothing to the view but naked rocks, mountains, and precipices, at the sight of which pilgrims are astonished, baulked in their expectations, and almost startled in their faith."* The people languish too, especially Israel. No protection is afforded to industry, and therefore the natives sow no more than is barely needful. No waggon or cart is to be seen, no hum of busy merchandise is heard. As for the handful of Jews in the land, they live poor and miserable, oppressed and fearful. They "*languish and fade*;" they are idle, except when bending over their Talmud, or attending their synagogue ; they never trade ; they

* Keith's Evidence, page 118.

depend on others for their support ; they are generally old and feeble. Their "*haughty people*"* are no longer known ; all such distinctions are levelled. And Palestine, "the *Holy Land*," is "*defiled*!" The worst of the Heathen, the most barbarous of Gentiles, have possessed it. Israel transgressed "*the laws*," the two tables of the moral code,—changed "*the ordinance*," the code of ceremonies and types being rested in, or made vain by traditions that led them to reject the Saviour when he came,—and broke "*the everlasting covenant*," referred to in Jer. xxxi. 32, and Heb. viii. 8. On this account "*the curse*" has come ; their land is under a peculiar blight, so that even Volney unwittingly spoke of some "*secret malediction*" upon it. Its inhabitants are few, as we saw already, and these few "*are burned up*," i. e., are feeling the fire of wrath, the scorching of the curse, and are "*desolate*." Often is their life in peril, often are they plundered and dare not complain. All Jerusalem wondered a few years ago, when a British Consul got justice done to a Jew in a plea against a Turk. A military despotism rules the land. No efforts to colonize it are ever made ; no dwellers in it, Jew or Gentile, are ever able to reach prosperity, or wring out more than a scanty subsistence. Why is this? Because the Lord had said, "*The curse* has devoured the

* i. e., their high ones, or princes ; Gesenius.

land." How fearful is his wrath, which shoots from his bent bow in the form of a curse ! The love of a reconciled Father used to light up the land with beauty, and fill it with plenty ; but his frown has withered the barren fig-tree.

"7. *The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh.* 8. *The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.* 9. *They shall not drink wine with a song ; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it."*

It is said here that there shall be seen special marks of the Lord's curse in *the vine*, in the *removal* of their *modes of expressing* joy, in the *sadness* of the people, and in the very *wines* still left. All this is fulfilled. The hills that once were clothed with vines are now waste and bare, while the terraces remain to testify that it was not always thus. "Ascending on the way from Gaza to Jerusalem (says Dr. Keith, p. 121) between two hills, so as to pass by the lowest level, the writer counted on one of them sixty-seven successive terraces, perfectly distinct, and in many places complete. . . . Mountain after mountain, without exception, is lined throughout, from the base to the summit, with terraces fading only in the distance, all uncovered now but by weeds and creeping thorns." In the narrative of the Mission in 1839,

the soil on these terraces is spoken of as rich, "the vines and the inhabitants alone are wanting, and the blessing from above." (P. 123.)

It is equally true that instruments of music are unused there now; the tabret and harp are never once heard among the few Jews. Even as to the other inhabitants, any such mode of expressing joy is so rare, that *the Narrative* of the Mission records at p. 118, "Here we overtook an African playing with all his might upon a shepherd's pipe made of two reeds. This was the first time we had seen any marks of joy in the land." Volney says of those instruments of music which he heard used by the natives, "Such instruments as they have, not excepting their flutes, are detestable."* No Jew handles the harp of David there, or sounds the cymbal, or touches viol, or psaltery; and the inhabitants around them seem to share in the sadness cast over the land. *The merryhearted* even, those who "drink wine and revel at feasts," excel only in "melancholy strains," says Volney;† and the gaiety of the French appeared to them a fit of delirium.

And then as to what *wine* is to be found there, one writes, "The wines of Jerusalem are execrable: a single fountain is of infinitely more value than

* Keith's Evidence, p. 144.

† Ibid., p. 144.

many wine-presses.”* The Mahomedan prohibition against wine no doubt led to this deterioration in a great measure. The Koran thus helped to fulfil the Word of God!

Ver. 10. “*The city of confusion is broken down ; every house is shut up, that no man may come in.*” This verse seems all at once to transport us to the capital, to Jerusalem ; and what is left in that thronged and busy city ? It lies desolate. It is broken down, like a shipwrecked vessel. (Ezek. xxvii. 34.) It is “*a city of emptiness*” (רִיקוּן), like the wilderness itself (see Job xii. 24) ; grass growing in its streets. Every house is like the dwelling of a leper, “*shut up*” (Levit. xiv. 38), so that none pass along the deserted streets—perhaps, shut up by the ruins that accumulate, like the houses of ruined Saphet, described by travellers.†

Ver. 11. “*There is a crying for wine in the streets ; all joy is darkened ; the mirth of the land ‡ is gone.*” Some suggest that this crying for wine is the indication of despair ; they seek to drown their grief by intoxication. But the true meaning is, “*There is a cry (lamentation) over the wine ;*”

* Keith, p. 147.

† “Narrative of Mission,” p. 273.

‡ מְשׁוּבַּת הָאָרֶץ is applied to Jerusalem, Psalm xlviii. 3. According to some, this clause means, “that Jerusalem, the joy of the earth, is gone into captivity.”

the word being קִרְיָא as in Jer. xiv. 2, "the cry of Jerusalem." They lament that the wine is gone, joy darkened, and the gladness of the land departed. Once it could be said, "Happy art thou, O Israel, O people saved by the Lord!" But now there is settled gloom over the beloved land. So remarkable is this aspect of sadness on the face of this land, not only on Israel within it, but even on its more prosperous possessors, that *Volney* was led into an inquiry as to how this peculiar melancholy might be accounted for, as he observed their "grave and phlegmatic exterior, and serious, nay, sad, and melancholy countenances."*

Ver. 12. "*In THE CITY is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.*" Here again is *Jerusalem's* state of desolation; and probably the days of its ever-memorable siege and destruction are here briefly touched upon. Look at it now! Heaps of ruins are everywhere to be met with, and not one specimen of its ancient architectural splendour remains. "The gate is broken down into ruins," (as Gesenius renders שְׁמִיטָה); the gates of the modern city being actually built over the buried heaps of those massy gateways, out and in at which went the mighty armies of Israel, and from which they so long beat back even the Roman legions.

Truly, Jerusalem is trodden down, and the land

* Keith's Evidence, p. 145.

is utterly desolate! It has lain thus for nearly 1800 years. No voice of gladness has come from Palestine to the nations round. It rejected *the glad tidings*, and its joy fled away. Woe, woe to her people! And woe, woe to the man who rejects the gift of a Saviour laid down at his feet by God!

Let us now notice the change in the Prophet's strain. Ver. 13. "*When thus it shall be in the midst of the land, among the people* (הַגִּוִּים the Gentiles,) *there shall be as the shaking of an olive-tree, and as the gleaning-grapes when the vintage is done.* Ver. 14. THEY (הֵמָּה) *shall lift up their voice; they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord; they shall cry aloud from the sea.*"

Here is a most beautiful prophecy of what was to take place in the earth during Israel's desolation. By their fall, salvation came to the Gentiles. It is declared here that during the time when Israel's land and people are thus desolate and trodden down, the Lord shall pass over to the isles of the Gentiles, as if his ark had taken refuge there. "When it shall be thus in the midst of THE LAND," it shall be otherwise elsewhere. At that very time, "*There shall be among the Gentiles* (הַגִּוִּים*) *as the shaking of an olive-tree,*"—a

* It is difficult to understand how interpreters have so often overlooked this clause as the key to the passage. The plural הַגִּוִּים is never once applied to Israel.

remnant among the nations who shall take up the cause of God. There shall be here and there, in Gentile lands, a seed to serve the Lord from among those who were once Heathens. They are "grafted in, and partake of the fatness of the olive-tree" (Rom. xi. 17), but they are few in number, compared with the kingdoms in which they are found—few as the olive-berries left when the tree has been beaten, and as the grapes left when the vintage has been gathered. No national conversions are to be expected, and no complete dedication of any kingdom to the Lord; but in many different lands the Lord is to have a people, a Gentile Church. In Greece, in Italy, in Africa, and Asia; in Great Britain and Germany; in such spots as these the Lord has had an elect people, while Israel's land has lain desolate—"when it is thus in the midst of the land." This Gentile remnant, coming into Israel's place, exalt the Lord's name. "*They*," i. e., *these Gentiles* (גוֹיִם), "*shall lift up the voice and sing*," till the sea resounds with their songs. The joy has passed away from Israel's land to the waters that laved its shores,—to the nations who sailed over these waters, and whose lands these waters washed. And may not the ships of Britain have been specially in the eye of the Prophet?

Seeing this transference of blessing, the Prophet is led by the Holy Spirit to cry to the Gentiles, in the way of congratulation. Even as the cry in Rev. xii. 12, is addressed to earth by way of information and warning, so this cry is, by way of congratulation and admonition, to embrace the season of grace. Since ye are the Lord's witnesses, see that ye witness well.

Ver. 15. "*Wherefore, glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea.*" Commentators differ much in regard to the word "בְּאֵרוֹת" *in the fires*. Most probably it signifies "*the regions of the lights,*" i. e., "*the lucid east,*"* where sun and moon (Psalm cxxxvi. 7, אֲרִיִּם) arise. And then the "*isles of the sea,*" denote the regions of Europe, countries opened up to Israel's knowledge by the Mediterranean. If so, east and west together are called on to glorify the Lord in this their day. The Gentile Churches, in east and west, seem specially referred to; as if Isaiah had pointed to the days when a converted flock would be found in Greece and in the Seven Churches of Asia; and onward to the time when *India* and even China should be visited; when God should be glorified in the South Seas,

* So Gesenius, quoting Homer's "Προς ἥω ἡελιοντε." Is not Homer's "ἡερμη" in Iliad, B. i., 497, connected with אֵר ?

and in Madagascar, and Madeira, and especially in *Britain*, chief of all "the isles of the sea."

This scene is a joyful relief to the holy Prophet's soul. And as he gazes on it, he observes that all over the world there is a remnant of the saved; for this is the time when souls are redeemed "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

Ver. 16. "*From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even, Glory to the Righteous!*" This is like the song, "Glory to God in the highest." It is a song to the Lord our Righteousness. He is the יְהוָה. He is called, "*ὁ δίκαιος*," in Acts vii. 52, and xxii. 14. His righteousness is shown by all the redeemed in every land; justification by his blood and righteousness is the burden of every Gospel message from Protestant lands.

"GLORY TO THE RIGHTEOUS ONE!"

But in the midst of this cheering scene, the Prophet remembers Jerusalem and Judah again. They share not in this song. We might, indeed, have expected that missionaries from these Gentile Churches would be at length successful in spreading the *glad tidings* over a happy world, and over Palestine. But, though it might have been so had the Lord pleased, it is not thus arranged in his eternal purpose. Hence, personifying his nation, the Prophet bursts out into deep lamentation.

Ver. 16. "*But I said, My leanness! My leanness! Woe unto me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously.*" Alas! my people share not in this blessedness. The good olive-tree has lost its fatness. They have no temple-songs, no praise, no blessedness! They and their land are in the invader's hands. My people are far from the Righteous One; and their land is trodden under foot by foes.

* What then? Is this state of things to be remedied by peaceful preaching of the Gospel? Are the nations to be subjugated to the sway of Christ by the spread of the truth? And is Israel, too, thus to be blessed?

Alas! no sooner is the Prophet's lamentation uttered, than again the scene changes. The day of *the Gentile election* passes away. Their day of grace reaches its evening. Oh! that the ten kingdoms of Europe, oh! that our land above all would hear and tremble! As our Lord foretels in Luke xxi. 24, 25, that there shall be great signs and dire commotions in earth and sky at the close of the times of the Gentiles, so here we find a similar view given us.

Ver. 17. "*Fear, and the pit, and the snare** are

* It has been often noticed that the Hebrew words here intentionally resemble each other, as if to express one

upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. 18. *And it shall come to pass that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare; for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.*" Here is "*the snare*," of which our Lord also speaks, Luke xxi. 35. Here are men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after "those things that are coming on the earth." (Luke xxi. 26.) And a catastrophe, like the Deluge, is at hand; "the windows of heaven" being opened, and the deep foundations of earth shaken. (Gen. vii. 11.) Ver. 19. "*The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved; the earth is moved exceedingly.* 20. *The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage (or rather, "swing like a hammock"*) ; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.*"

There is no hint here of Millennial days coming in on us calmly like a tide. No; here is *Earth's* tremendous visitation. It is parallel to what

calamity crowding on the heels of another, פָּחַד וְפִחַח וְצָר.
 "Incident in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim."

* *The cottage*, כְּמִלְכָּה, was the shed set up in vineyards or cucumber-gardens; a hanging couch, or shed, put up on slender poles; sometimes swung on trees.

Israel's land once bore, vers. 1, 3, 4. The Gentiles have rejected the Lord as Israel did; and they too, therefore, are cut off. This is referred to in ver. 20, "*The transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it.*" It is what Paul wrote in Rom. xi. 22, "Otherwise, thou also shalt be cut off." The Gentile earth falls, and is completely prostrate, not able to gain its feet again; "*She falls and cannot rise again.*" It is not one stroke only, one stunning stroke—not like the rapid, and for a time overwhelming conquests of Napoleon—it is a sweeping destruction that leaves it like a fallen foe, completely prostrate, at the mercy of his conqueror. Just as Amos v. 2, describes the fall of Zion, "*She shall no more rise; she is prostrate upon her land;*" she cannot recover her feet.

What, then, is to be the end of these changes? Israel's land and people are fallen; and now the Gentiles fall as thoroughly as they. "*They also are cut off.*" Is there an utter end now? No; "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." (Rom. xi. 32.)* The *Jewish* and the *Gentile* election having failed in turn, the

* Some have been misled as to God's purpose by our version of Rom. xi. 31. But the obvious and only true rendering of that passage is, "Even so those also have not believed *your* mercy, that they also may obtain mercy." They are received back in mere grace, after rejecting Him who was preached among the Gentiles.

Lord is now to open out another dispensation of grace.

But, first of all, we see the Lord judging his enemies in the midst of the earth. He has come amid its shakings (Luke xxi. 27), to plead his own cause.

Ver. 21. *"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. 22. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison ; and after many days shall they be visited."* Almost all commentators notice the exact resemblance between this passage and Rev. xix. 19, 20, and xx. 1—4. *Fraser*, in his "Commentary on Isaiah," has no hesitation in referring "*the host of the high ones on high*," to the devil, who with his hosts is called "spiritual wickedness in high places ;" and then this passage is the binding of Satan, and his being cast into the bottomless pit. "*The kings of the earth on the earth*," (מְלָכֵי הָאָרֶץ,) seems quite parallel to Rev. xvi. 14, "*the kings of the earth and of the whole world*," gathered to Armageddon. The same writer, already quoted, with no Premillennial leanings to influence him, does not hesitate to deduce from the clause which follows, that these kings are reserved "in prison" for another day of punishment,

while during the continuance of these thousand years (the "many days" of Isaiah), the Lord's glory is seen filling the earth. On the whole, however, "*the host of the high ones*,"* refers rather to the pretensions and power of *Antichrist*, the Man of Sin, "who as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God," while his followers are "*the kings of the earth*," whom "the High One" leads along in his train. These have one mind, and give their kingdom and power to the beast. (Rev. xvii. 13.) These confederated ones are defeated at once by the Lord, and "*gathered together, prisoners each one of them, in the pit and shut up in the prison*." The *prison*, and the *pit*, are equivalent terms (Jer. xxxvii. 16); here they denote the dungeon into which the Lord casts his enemies until the day of final sentence comes. Thus easily has the Lord disposed of his foes, and cast them into outer darkness, intending "*after many days*" to take up their case again, and finish their sentence.

Meanwhile, during all these "*many days*," parallel to Rev. xx. 2, 3, 5, another scene appears. Earth is eased of its destroyers, but not left empty. *The land* of Israel is not left desolate. There is

* מְרוֹם has often a sense like this: even in ver. 4, it is used of human exaltation; and chap. xxvi. 5, is perhaps a special allusion to this scene.

a new glory come to earth and to Israel; for the Prophet adds in close connexion :

Ver. 23. "*And the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when (׳נ, because,) the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.*"*

Here it is evident that the Lord of hosts takes the place of the kings and high ones, who hitherto had lifted up their horn over Israel and over the earth. His glory is the substitute for their glory. And is it not equally manifest that the "*Zion and Jerusalem*" of the Prophet are the very spots so well known by these names? Has he not been lamenting his desolate land? And now he sees the well-known site of its tabernacle and temple, where the glory dwelt over the mercy-seat, once more restored to more than former splendour. A brighter glory than sun or moon has come. Who is this "*Lord of hosts who reigns in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem?*" (Psalm xxiv. 7.)

To ascertain this, let us listen first to the Song

* There is no doubt that here the rendering of Lowth and others is the more correct, "For Jehovah of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem; and before his ancients shall he be glorified." His "ancients" may mean "his elders," i. e., his princes, as Isa. xxxii. 1. Though some, e. g., Joseph Perry, in his "Glory of the Visible Church," interpret it of "the ancient people," Israel. (P. 15.)

that is sung by a ransomed people to their Redeemer and King, thus reigning in glory. For as when the Lamb had taken the book, claiming thereby earth as his heritage, there was a burst of song in heaven (Rev. v. 8, 9), so is there here when the glorious Lord shines forth as King of all the earth from Zion and Jerusalem.

THE SONG.—(Ch. xxv. 1—5.)

“O Lord, thou art my God!
 I will exalt thee! I will praise thy name!
 For thou hast done wonderful things.
 Thy counsels* of old are faithfulness and truth.
 For thou hast made of a city, a heap,
 Of a defenced city, a ruin;
 A palace of strangers† to be no city;
 It shall never be built!
 Therefore shall the strong‡ people glorify thee,
 The city of the terrible nations shall fear thee!

* Compare Paul's exclamation on seeing the result of God's purposes toward Jew and Gentile, Rom. xi. 33—36, “O, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” &c. The Prophet here sings of these counsels having been all brought to pass.

† THE CITY that is turned to a pile of ruin is no doubt Antichrist's city, the *Babylon* of the Apocalypse. This city was like a splendid palace, and yet it sinks as the millstone in the waters. (Rev. xviii. 10—24.) “*Strangers*” are foreign invaders.

‡ “*The strong people*” may be *Israel*; while the “*city of the terrible Heathen*,” (גִּיּוֹן,) means every city of the Heathen that hears of the Lord's doings.

For thou hast been a strength to the poor ; *
 A strength to the needy in his distress ;
 A refuge from the storm ;
 A shadow from the heat ;
 When the blast of the terrible ones
 Was as a storm against the wall. †
 Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers
 As the heat in a dry place, ‡

* All throughout thy people's history, this has been thy gracious aspect toward them. In all generations, Immanuel has been a "strength," a fortress, into which the sinner ran who had no help of man, and no help in himself. There he ever found free and full salvation, safe from guilt, and safe from persecuting men.

† נֶזֶם קִיר, a violent storm that throws down walls. (Gesen.)

‡ "Thou shalt;" the future used to express a customary act. "Thou hast done so, and wilt ever be a God who dost the same." The allusion of the Prophet to a well-known phenomenon in the east is very beautiful. In the "Narrative of the Jewish Mission," p. 77, it is said, "We frequently experienced an illustration of a passage in the prophet Isaiah. About mid-day, when the heat was very oppressive, a small cloud, scarcely observable by the eye, passed over the disc of the burning sun. Immediately, the intense heat abated, a gentle breeze sprung up, and we were refreshed." The sandy desert, scorched up by the sun at noon, is "the dry place;" and with divine ease, the Lord employs a little cloud to temper and reduce the glowing heat. So with his foes. So with our most grievous trials. How soon and how easily the Lord can deliver! In the "Narrative," "the branch" (נֶזֶם) is interpreted to be the *palm-branch* of triumph. This, however, is doubtful; for the word is rather a *vine-branch*. The true rendering is, "*The song of triumph*" taken out of the mouth of their foes.

Even the heat with the shadow of a cloud !
The branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low ! ”

We do not stay to comment on this magnificent song, so exquisitely sweet in itself, and so suitable for the day of the Lord's triumphs. The eternal counsels of Jehovah carried into effect afford matter of unbounded delight and adoration. The Lord's own character appears more than ever to the world, as full of grace and truth. How attractive to the helpless sinner is this God of all grace ! What a heart of love ! What a bosom of inviting tenderness ! What wings of shelter ! Many shall say in that day, “ *Oh, if I had known !* ! ”

The song ceases ; and what next is our attention called to ? It is to a feast. The feast is on the same spot, viz., Mount Zion. Something manifested there forms the feast. Can it be anything less than *The Lord Himself* that is here—“ Meat indeed, and drink indeed ! ” Upon his name—his manifestation of his perfections and glory—they feast. The meek eat and are satisfied.

Ver. 6. “ *And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees ; of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.* ” It is on the hills of Zion that this feast takes place,—this “ *feast of delicacies, feast of old wines ; of delicacies exquisitely rich, and old wines perfectly refined.* ”

(Lowth.) For it is there that the Lord of hosts unfolds his glory, as was declared in chap. xxiv. 23. But though that particular spot be the more directly honoured one, yet it is not to that spot, nor to that land of which it is the glory, that the blessing is confined. For now there is life flowing from Jerusalem to the ends of the whole earth.

Ver. 7. "*And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people (הַפָּנִים), and the vail that is spread over all nations.*" How can He do this "*on this mountain,*" since it is a deed that extends to the whole earth? He does so by standing on that spot at the moment when He puts forth his power to accomplish this result. The "*face of the covering*"* over the Gentiles, seems to be that covering which was flung over the head of a criminal who was to be led to the gallows; as in Esther vii. 8, and to which reference is made in Prov. x. 6, and 11. These Gentile nations, lying under the sentence of death, are now delivered, as Psalm cii. 20, declares to have been long ago resolved. And so, the "*vail spread over all the heathen*"

* Compared with Job xli. 13, by Gesenius, where "face of his garment" is the garment itself. But if it be the criminal's covering, then the strict grammatical sense may be, *the face* of the covering torn off,—the front of it,—that part of it which hung over the face.

(עֵלֶם) is the blinding vail of ignorance and unbelief—the vail that was on the heart. This is removed also. By the one act they are *justified*; by the other, they are *sanctified*. The strong word (שָׁלַט,) “swallow up,” is employed, as if shewing us the covering and the vail flung into some whirlpool’s vortex, and then disappearing for ever.

Thus, the Lord will send forth salvation to the heathen lands; Jesus being now visibly glorified with more glory than ever yet encompassed Him, the Holy Spirit is given in fuller measure than ever He had been till now. And so the nations are led to the justifying Saviour, and receive the Spirit of all truth.

But this is not all. He that reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem so gloriously, does on that same day exhibit his power in another form.

Ver. 8. “*He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces: and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth. For the Lord hath spoken it.*” This, says Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 54, is *the resurrection* of Christ’s saints. “They that are Christ’s at his Coming,” whether living still, or in their graves, are on that day raised up incorruptible. *Death* is vanquished in their case; and as one after another puts on immortality and incorrup-

tion, it is as if the Lord flung death into the whirlpool (גִּלְעָד again), with all his vaunted trophies.*

And while He does this for those that were his at his Coming, He spreads joy over all the ransomed earth. "He wipes away tears from off all faces." And his people are no longer a reproach and a by-word, but are acknowledged as the redeemed of the Lord; though from the days of Abel till now they had been the world's derision. It seems to be now when the glorified saints are looking down upon these "scenes surpassing fable, and yet true," that they cry one to another in the words of ver. 9:†

"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation." Just as they sing at the marriage supper, in Rev. xix. 7.

And now, to heighten the glory and bliss of this scene by one dark contrast, we are presented in a few touches with the sad end of all adversaries. In the days of the prophets (see Jer. xlviii. 11, 27), *Moab*, who dwelt right east from Judah, between

* Chap. xxvi. is a song sung at that time by Israel, who see its various themes illustrated by events. At ver. 19 the Lord promises the resurrection of the saints,—

"Thy dead men shall live; my dead they shall arise;
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust," —

† אֶחָד, as in chap. xlv. 24. "One shall say." Here we cannot but express our wonder, that Mr. Brown (p. 214) did

Ammon on the north, and *Edom* on the south,* was an enemy who dwelt at ease, in haughty confidence, and made Israel his derision. Choosing this people, therefore, as a specimen, the prophet says, that in that day of triumph to Israel, Moab shall be left a prostrate, vanquished foe. Just as Babylon and Nineveh are elsewhere spoken of as left for ever abased.

Ver. 10. "*For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest,*" i. e., to defend and establish Jerusalem, as Nehemiah (ii. 8) and Ezra (vii. 6), the builders of the city of old, employ the expression.

"*And Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill. 11 And he shall spread forth his hands in the midst of them, as he that swimmeth spreadeth forth his hands to swim; and he shall bring down their pride, together with the spoils of their hands. 12. And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall he bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.*"

The prophet says, in the close of this vision, "And evermore shall Jerusalem be established. But very different is the doom of Moab. I see him, in vision, crushed under the wheel of the

not feel checked as he changed the prophet's words, "*He is come,*" into "*This is what we looked for; now it is come.*"

* These three foes are mentioned in Isa. xi. 14, as subdued in the latter day.

threshing-car. I see the Lord, with as much ease as a swimmer divides the water, scattering his array. I see thee, O Moab, laid low, even to the dust."

So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord ; but let them that love thee be as the sun when he shineth in his strength.

We must now return for a little upon this prophecy, and point out the proof it contains of the Premillennial Coming.

We do not here dwell upon the general strain of the passage, which certainly is all in favour of this view, far better than with any other. As for example, ver. 23 of chap. xxiv. But there is another, and yet stronger evidence in this passage. "*The swallowing up of death*" is declared by Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 54, to be at the resurrection of the saints at Christ's Coming. If so, then this *feast*, ver. 6, is at Christ's Coming, and (ver. 7) the conversion of the nations is also at his Coming. This is the plain, obvious, simple view of the matter to every reader who has no previous leanings to derange his judgment.

But to this Mr. Brown objects. He finds here the days of the Gospel dispensation. One might ask, Is not the "*rebuke of his people*" a charac-

teristic of these days? And yet, *in the days mentioned here*, it is removed. Does the "offence of the cross cease" before the Lord comes? Is not the true Church ever persecuted by the wicked till then? And are "*tears wiped away?*" Is it not through "much tribulation" that we enter the kingdom of heaven? Our present time, also, is a time of "patient waiting for Christ" (2 Thess. iii. 5): but did they not sing to one another in ver. 9, "*Lo, this is he!* We waited, and He is now come?" Lo, there is our ransom visibly seen! There is the Rock of Ages whom, when we had not seen, we loved; and in whom, though then we saw Him not, we believed, rejoicing with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

But passing from all subsidiary difficulties in the way of applying the passage to days before Christ's Coming, we at once come to the authority of Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 54, and oppose it to all that Mr. Brown can assert. "*Τότε γενήσεται ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος*"—"then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory." The trumpet shall sound, and the dead saints be raised incorruptible, and the living changed (ver. 52); "so *when* this corruptible shall have put on incorruptible, and this mortal immortality (ver. 54), *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written."

Paul says, it is never fulfilled till then. What-

ever accommodations may have been made of "the feast of fat things," whatever may have been said by way of allusion as to the Gospel "wiping away all tears," still says Paul in effect, that was not the real meaning, that was not the true fulfilment. It is only when the day of Christ arrives that "*then* shall be brought to pass this saying that is written, *Death is swallowed up in victory.*" The time of this passage being fulfilled is the Coming of the Lord, according to Paul's inspired comment upon it ; and if so, then the Lord's Coming *precedes* the days of blessedness to earth—precedes the Millennial days of joy to the nations.

It is amazing to find such a man of God as Mr. Brown elaborating an interpretation that countenances the errors of those who play with the Divine testimony as if it were purposely elastic. It might have been speciously alleged that prophetic words are often highly figurative ; but what we insist upon is, that *Paul's interpretation of Isaiah* has set the matter at rest.

Yet Mr. Brown ventures thus to paraphrase the words. "*She is to be a dead Church no longer ; languor and lethargy shall no more stupify her spirit and paralyse her exertions. He will swallow up death in victory by a glorious resurrection of the Church from all that deadness which before characterized her.*" (Page 208.) And here is his

very strong declaration in face of Paul's assertion —“ *We have no hesitation in replying to this, that the one direct and immediate object of the whole prediction is to announce the Gospel Church as shedding its varied blessings upon all lands!*” (Page 208.) “ *The resurrection state is IN these passages, but it is not the direct and immediate subject of the prediction!!*” (Page 26.) And here is the principle of reasoning (for it is by a process of inference alone that he arrives at his conclusion) which seems to justify his position. “ *There is not one of the terms by which the state of grace is described, which does not convey underneath it an announcement of the corresponding thing in the state of glory. . . . All that ever will be is *seminally* contained in the Church's present state, and truly couched under every description of that present state.*” (Page 207.) And then “ *The apostles in quoting them have PICKED OUT OF THEM that ultimate and perfect sense of them which alone suited their purpose.*” (Page 210.)

Such are Mr. B.'s views, embodying a principle which is altogether unsafe, while it is fitted to obscure the plainest passage. The principle, indeed, that “all that ever will be is *seminally* contained in the *Church's present state*,” has truth in it; but must not be taken without modification. Nor does he prove that *this passage* is a description of the

seminal state. Certainly, if it were, we should be tempted to conclude that there is little importance in observing the difference between the oak tree in all its strength and stately growth, and the acorn whence it springs. But we say again that his interpretation is an assertion, a bare assertion, in face of Paul's inspired comment in 1 Cor. xv. 54.

We might have made some remarks * on Mr. Brown's application of the preceding part of the chapter. He applies it to the fall of the *literal Babylon* in the first place—an application to which nothing in the context is fitted to lead us—and then, all at once, with a bound, he finds that “the evangelical and Millennial events which are announced, *carry us clean over the head* of the Jewish dispensation into Gospel times, and the analogous events of those times.” Now, we again seek in vain for the proof of this sudden transition. He says, “he does not like fanciful men to thrust their analogies upon him ;” he asks only for such analogies “as may be shewn from Scripture itself to be Divinely ordained and arranged.” Yet all the while, he has omitted to shew that *here* he has

* Mr. B. cites Hosea xiii. 14, as another passage quoted by Paul on the same principle. But this is very doubtful. The form of the words bear some resemblance, especially as rendered by the Septuagint. Paul, however, is not making a quotation.

Scripture in his favour, or why he has not been satisfied with Paul's announcement that this was the resurrection time.

It is also a mere assertion on his part to say, (page 204,) that "*the feast*" can mean "*nothing but the salvation of the Gospel.*" He has not proved this ; he might as well maintain that because the Gospel is a feast, that therefore there can be no other feasts spoken of but that one, wherever the term "feast" occurs. We may be wrong in our application, but we do not say, "It *cannot* mean anything else." If the term be descriptive of the blessings which Christ brought us at his First Coming—if these are truly "a feast made for laughter," why should it be thought incredible that the joy and blessedness of His Second Coming, when we see the manifested Son of God and Son of Man, should be spoken of as *a feast of fat things*?

Believing, as we do, that we have as much reason to understand "*the feast*" of the blessing of the Lord's Second Coming, as he has to appropriate it to the first, we find none of his alleged difficulties, such as making "the state of *grace* a type of the state of *glory.*" Nor are we landed in his embarrassment regarding "*making the feast to all nations.*" Mr. B. has to interpret the words not as a declaration that then there is a feast set before

all nations, such as was not set before them hitherto—which is surely the obvious sense—but as a declaration that then the feast which was set before them at Christ's First Coming shall be actually partaken of by all nations. But it is one thing to "make all people feast," and another to "set a feast before all people."

Nor, once more, will we ever venture to assert that the state of grace is "incomparably the greater and better thing of the two," (page 205,) so long as we find the beloved and holy John saying, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see Him as He is." (1 John iii. 2.) Surely, to be altogether like Christ, body and soul, is an "incomparably greater and better thing," than to be only bearing a very faint resemblance. Surely, if *glory* be the completion of *grace*, the completed redemption is "an incomparably greater and better thing" than the begun redemption. Surely, it Paul thought departing from the body in order to be with Christ a "*far better*" thing (Phil. i. 23), then beyond all doubt it is "*far better*" for body and soul together to be raised incorruptible and for ever perfect.

CHAPTER XII.

PROOFS THAT THE SECOND ADVENT IS PREMILLENNIAL. ZECHARIAH'S PROPHECY, CHAP. XIV.

WE have elsewhere noticed that "*the day of the Lord*" is not an expression sufficient to fix the time to which the prophecy refers. But we need not spend much space in settling this matter here. For all admit that from ver. 5 to the end, Millennial times are foretold. It is only in regard to the first four verses, that difference of opinion in regard to *the time* of their fulfilment exists.

And this difference of opinion as to the first four verses may be easily stated and discussed. There are just two views held in regard to them, that claim consideration. The one view applies them to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. The other, to the period of Israel's final tribulation when the Lord appears." *

* Dr. Urwick (p. 216) has a scheme quite peculiar to himself. It is simply this. He asks his reader to admit that

If we go back to chap. xiii. 7, we find the proper commencement of this closing vision of Zechariah. It commences at the first Coming of Christ. He hears a voice from heaven :

Ver. 7. *"Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts : smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered ; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."*

Our Lord, in Matt. xxvi. 31, as he passed down to Gethsemane at the head of his little flock, applied this passage to himself. The hour was come when the flaming sword that guarded the tree of life from man's approach, should be plunged in the heart of the Saviour. The voice from the throne was heard by Jesus saying, "Smite." That night he saw the gleaming of the fearful sword ; and next day it was sheathed in his person. The disciples were scattered—a type of the fear and dispersion of his flock in all seasons of trial ; but he "put his hand" around them—gathered them as a shepherd.

Ver. 8. *"And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off*

Jerusalem in this chapter is "*the heavenly Jerusalem*," the Gospel Church. This granted, he proceeds to interpret vers. 1, 8, of the slaying of the witnesses, and so on. But his premises will be denied by all but himself.

and die, but the third shall be left therein." The destruction of Jerusalem, and the slaughter attending it, cut off two-thirds of the nation. A feeble remnant remained in the land.

Ver. 9. "*And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined; and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God.*"

The feeble remnant left in the land were reduced by other wars and calamities, and some were scattered over the face of the earth. Still, what remains of them is not forgotten. They are beloved for their fathers' sakes. Many tribulations they have borne; many persecutions has that poor nation endured, ever since they rejected the Shepherd. Through fire they have passed, and through the furnace heat. It appears they will, at the close of "*the tribulation of those days*" (Matt. xxiv. 29), suffer grievously; ~~but~~ that shall be the hour of their return to the Lord, and of the Lord's returning grace to them. This fire and furnace-heat seems farther spoken of in the next verse.

Ver. 1. "*Behold, the day of the Lord* cometh,*

* Though "the day of the Lord" is not confined to one special time, yet here there is a special time marked out by the unusual collocation "לְיוֹם אֶחָד," a day cometh—a day for

and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.
2. *For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle ; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished ; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."*

This seems to foretel the last terrible wave of Israel's long-continued tribulation. There shall be a gathering of the nations—the same, no doubt, who gather to Armageddon—against Jerusalem ; and these shall be treading Jerusalem under foot more haughtily than ever, as if the times of the Gentiles were not fulfilled. Those armies are plundering the city, and inflicting such cruelties on the people as have been lately exercised toward the *Nestorians* of Kurdistan ; they are taking captive all that are worth their pains ; and they are content to leave a small residue. They imagine their success complete : when, lo ! there is an irresistible conqueror seen advancing.

Ver. 3. "*Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle."*

The "as" here is not a reference to the *manner* in which he is to do this ; but it refers to the *character* of the Lord. Just as in Isa. xxii. 5, though Dr. Henderson tries to reject the emphasis of it.

tainty of his doing it. He shall fight as really at that time in the behalf of Israel as in ancient days, when Joshua, or David, or the Angel that destroyed Sennacherib, went forth in his name: perhaps combining all the wonders of those ancient days into one great display on this great day of the Lord.

But here we must stay to notice how others have tried to understand these verses. Dr. Henderson, in his "Commentary on the Minor Prophets," refers all this to the Roman invasion and the siege under Titus. He actually says, that ver. 2 "contains a fearful description of the capture of Jerusalem under the command of that general." But do not "all nations" more naturally imply independent kingdoms? Or, passing from this, was it at all a *characteristic* of that siege that "the houses were plundered, and the women ravished?" And to say that "*half of the city shall go into captivity*," is by no means singling out the true features of that catastrophe. It is not true of that siege "*that the residue of the people were not cut off from the city*." Lowth tries to escape this, by understanding it of there being 40,000 of the citizens whom Titus suffered to go whither they would. But, surely, they left the city. The Lord did *not go forth and fight against these*

armies "on that day," which is the period under consideration; and hence, *Lowth* is reduced to the shift of saying, that "then," means "afterwards!"

And to say that the following verses (vers. 4, 5) are a practical "assurance of the effectual means of escape that should be provided for the pious," is surely too meagre and unsatisfactory a theory ever to find other supporters than those who think that they must find some means of evading the Personal Appearing of the Lord with all his saints.

Only read the words as they stand without prejudice, and how plain are they! Indeed, they are so plain, that there is great difficulty found "*how not to understand them.*" Many who are averse to the personal reign, admit without hesitation, that here there is at least some personal Appearing of the Lord.

Ver. 4. "*And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east, and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.* 5. *And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the*

days of Uzziah, king of Judah ; and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee !”

Is this great event in ver. 4 no more than a figurative way of stating that “the difficulties in the way of the flight of the Christians to Pella would all be removed?” Some have said so. But, surely, this is to trifle with the word of God.

As Ezek. xi. 23, tells us of the glory departing at this memorable Mount of Olives, so Zechariah tells of the Lord of glory returning at that very spot. There “*his feet stand,*” as the feet of the worshippers stood within Jerusalem’s gates. (Psalm cxxii. 2.) The spot is defined most particularly. There must be good reason for this special call to attention. “The Mount of Olives” “before,” i. e., right opposite, “Jerusalem,” “on the east;” and again, this “Mount of Olives shall cleave.”

We might suggest that the Lord’s Appearing on this hill coincides with Joel’s prophecy regarding the *valley of Jehoshaphat* being the scene of the nation’s overthrow. But passing from parallel passages, let us remember how like it is to a divinely intended coincidence that the same Prophet who tells of the “piercing” of the Lord, and the “smiting of the Shepherd,” should be used to tell also of the favourite hill of the Pierced One, the smitten Shepherd. That Mount of Olives

was dear to the Father, because of the sojournings of his beloved Son, who so often crossed it at evening on his way to Bethany. It was to be dear to the Lord Jesus, as the hill at whose foot lay the garden of Gethsemane; on whose brow he sat and foretold the ruin of the temple; and on one of whose heights he stood and wept in pity. There, too, he was to leave the world—at Bethany, on the other side of it. How beautifully natural is it to find “the Son of Man” standing on the same hill at his Second Coming? There his soul was sorrowful even unto death; now He returns thither to rejoice. There He wept over Israel; but now He returns to “rest over them in his love.” There He foretold the ruin of their city and temple; but now He stands there to scatter their foes. There He took farewell of his disciples; but now He has come back to be for ever with them.

*The cleaving of the Mount of Olives** is an event caused by his power. A deep valley is left, running quite through the breadth of the hill. The middle of the hill, probably its middle summit, sinks down, while the other two summits rise like

* An English writer, *Barnslee*, gravely paraphrases this clause, “The spirit of the Lord’s presence shall spread itself over the whole world, toward east and west.” In ver. 5, in like manner, he says that, “fleeing to the valley of the mountains,” is fleeing to the Gospel for life.

walls on its north and south sides. What if this be meant as a token and type that the Lord has cleared away all barriers to his glory, has rent the veil, has made an open way of access to his presence? And if, as is probable, the *river from the temple flows down this valley* (ver. 8, and Ezek. xlvii. 1), it may be to show in an emblem (what will then be exhibited in such fulness), that life and salvation are then to go forth unobstructed from Jerusalem, the city of the Great King.

The people of the city shall flee to the valley. Alarmed at all these events, they hastily leave their city and run to this "cleft valley," as a place of shelter. Perhaps, in this way, Jerusalem shall be left clear of all inhabitants for a time, until the Lord has purified and purged that whole platform where his wonders are to be exhibited. These are merely conjectures; we build nothing on them.

But how shall these things ever be? "*The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.*"* The structure of the sentence might almost lead us to prefer this rendering:—

"And come thou, Lord my God, (אֲדָנָי)

"And all the saints with thee."

* As to the coming of the saints, Joseph Perry, (page 123,) remarks, that 1 Thess. iv. 17, states their being caught up to meet Him, and this passage declares that they do not remain in the air, but come down along with Him.

But, as they stand, the change of persons is to be accounted for by noticing that, (as in Isaiah lii. 14,) the prophet suddenly looks up in the face of a coming Lord, and speaks *to* him, instead of speaking *about* him.

We have seen the singular changes that the context announces, and the alarm of the people. But all is accounted for when we reach this clause and discover "*the Lord and his saints.*"

From this point, the whole scene changes. There is a season of most glorious light ; living waters are flowing ; Jehovah alone reigneth ; Jerusalem is raised up from the dust ; foes fall and perish ; nations come up to visit the happy city ; and "holiness to the Lord" appears on the very bridles of the horses. What is the cause of this unprecedented revolution ? It is found in ver. 5,—"*The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.*"

No writer, so far as we remember, has doubted that onward from ver. 6 we are in Millennial days. All agree that from ver. 6 to the end, the prophet is describing the Millennial time. But if so, it is worthy of remark that, *immediately before he began that theme*, he sang of the *Coming of the Lord with all his saints.*

This is not a symbolical vision, like the Apocalypse ; but a plain prophetic history. And if *Jerusalem* be the literal Jerusalem, and the Mount

of Olives the very hill whence the Lord ascended, and if the nations be literal nations, and the fleeing of the people a real fleeing, then why, in a prophecy where there is no mysterious symbol used, should we hesitate for a moment to understand literally, the "*Coming of the Lord, and all his saints with Him?*"

Thus we see in this passage a most simple and plain proof that the *Coming of Christ, with his saints*, is an event that *precedes the Millennium*. Had no mention been made of "*the saints*," it might have been attempted to prove that *the Coming* was only a figurative one; but it is not so easy to assert this when he is accompanied with his saints. The prophet seems to represent the scene as Paul does 1 Thess. iv. 14. There is first, the Lord Jesus—"the Lord my God;" and then those that sleep in Jesus—"all the saints"—in his bosom, brought with him to share in His glory. Indeed, Paul's expression, "*The Coming of the Lord with all his saints*," is a direct reference to this passage (1 Thess. iii. 13), so far as we can judge.

Let us now see what follows upon the Coming of the Lord.

Ver. 6. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark,*" i. e., not clearness now, and then darkness returning.
Ver. 7. *But it shall be one day, which shall be*

known to the Lord ; not day, nor night : but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light." Even the continued presence of the Shechinah glory would create a continued day over Jerusalem ; as to some extent did the fiery pillar over the camp. How much more, the glory of the Lord, who shall in some way shine forth there in visible majesty. But still, all this external glory is merely the rim round the golden table—merely the shell that encloses the kernel—merely a visible emblem of the yet more glorious light of God's love and manifested name. In the light of that name, gloriously revealed to them, that happy land shall ever rejoice. There shall not now be alternate * prosperity and adversity—revival and backsliding ; here a few who know the Lord, and there thousands who live without God. All there shall walk "in the light of the Lord" (Isaiah ii. 5), and nations shall "come to that light, and kings to the brightness of that rising." (Isaiah lx. 3.)

At present our earth has only a few streaks of light. Even believers are half sorrowful, though singing the new song ; and often inconsistent,

* We may adopt Dr. Henderson's rendering of the words in ver. 6, though not his interpretation, "*There shall not be the light of the precious orbs,*" i.e., sun, moon, and stars, in brightness at one time ; "*and condensed darkness,*" i.e., at another time, mists and clouds hiding these luminaries.

though walking on the highway of holiness. But that day shall be all light—no evening at all—at the usual time of evening, lo ! the light continues as at noon-day. No cooling down of love, no decay of zeal, no spending of fervour, no weariness in the race. Blessed day of God ! we look for and haste unto its coming.* Then shall the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth.

Ver. 8. "*And it shall be in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem ; half of them toward the former sea (i.e., the Dead Sea), and half of them toward the hinder sea (i.e., the Mediterranean) ; in summer and in winter shall it be.*"

We find in Ezekiel's mysterious temple, a river flowing out from the threshold (xlvi. 1, 8), whose waters heal the Dead Sea. Joel iii. 18 mentions the same. This will be a literal river, and the Dead Sea shall literally be healed of its saltness—all to form an impressive setting forth of the truth that the days have now come when the Holy Spirit is to flow forth over the earth in streams that will heal and save, from Christ, the True Temple, now glorified beyond all conception.

* The words of ver. 7 might be more satisfactorily rendered thus. "*And it shall come to pass (יָבֹאוּ in vers 6, 8), that that day shall be one (i.e., day alone, as ver. 9). It shall be known to the Lord not as day, and not as night. And it shall come to pass, that at evening-time it shall be light.*"

This river flows also to the western sea—intimating blessing on all sides. From Jerusalem goeth forth the law. Summer and winter this stream flows on, intimating that now the blessings of salvation shall be poured forth uninterruptedly, and subject to no occasional arrest.

Ver. 9. "*And the Lord shall be King over all the earth. In that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.*" Or rather, "In that day the Lord shall be alone, and his name alone," i.e., no other than the Lord Jehovah shall be worshipped; and no perfections ("name") recognised as Divine, but those only that belong to Him.

The Lord shall be obeyed—"King of kings." At present, the kings of earth cast aside his words, and even professedly Christian Churches yield to encroachments on his royal prerogative. But that day shall see Christ "King of Nations and King of Saints." On that day, too, saints shall agree in their views; disunion and division shall disappear. All shall look through the same telescope, and see the same cluster of stars in the same position.

"The Lord alone exalted" is the essence of blessedness to each of us individually, and to earth at large. Heaven is God all in all. Let us ask, thee, reader, does this appear attractive? Wilt thou part with thyself? Shall God alone be thy portion? Shall God in Christ be thy bread and wine? God alone thy sun and shield? thy father? thy friend?

thy heritage? thy Lord, and king, and shepherd? thy God, thy glory? Christ alone with his disciples on the transfiguration hill, furnished the moments of overwhelming ecstasy. Indeed, the first moment of joy and peace a sinner knows is that when he ceases from self, and rests with unmixed dependence on the Lord. So ever after. The higher God is in our view, the higher degree of bliss. This is happiness—Millennial happiness! *Self* is the cause of sorrow. But earth is flooded with bliss the moment the Lord becomes its all.

Ver. 10. *“All the land shall be turned as a plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem; and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place; from Benjamin’s gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king’s vinepresses. 11. And men shall dwell in it; and there shall be no more utter destruction; * but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.”*

Here is the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the metropolis of the land and of the earth; built again *“in her place,”* i. e., on the very spot it once occupied, as is farther set forth by mentioning the ancient gates, towers, and vinepresses.

* Properly, “There shall be no more curse.” (Lowth, Henderson. See Rev. xxii. 3.) The *light*, the *river*, the *city*, the *curse removed*, all remind us of the analogy between this prophet and the Apocalypse.

There is to be a levelling of the country round Jerusalem. Lowth suggests that the *earthquake* of ver. 4 may be the means used. It reaches as far as *Geba* on the north, and as far as *Rimmon* on the south. A large platform for a great city is formed, and free access opened on north and south, while the river flows east and west. A free access and a "large place" are characteristic of God in all his dealings with man, and Jerusalem in its renewed state of prosperity and holiness shall set forth the same for ever.

Ver. 12. "*And this shall be the plague.*" The prophet now casts back a melancholy glance at the unhappy foes of God and his people, as if by way of adding to the joy of the redeemed people through means of the sad contrast. Hear their woful end, —smitten with plagues because they came up against the people of the Lord. He is enlarging on what he hinted at in verse 3. This was their doom on that day, on the very spot where they sinned.

12. "*And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem ; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.* 13. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them ; and they shall lay hold every one on*

the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. 14. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel in great abundance.

15. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague."

Behold! the Lord smiting the confederate nations as he smote Sennacherib, leaving them like ghastly skeletons on the spot. The reference in ver. 14 is to what was spoken of previously in ver. 1, the state of the returned Jews in Jerusalem when those nations came against them. They now divide the spoil of those who came to spoil them.

And now the prophet returns to his more pleasant theme. Earth is at rest; the destroyer is away. "*The Lord has come with all his saints.*" (Ver. 5.) This is essential to the full understanding of what is now declared.

16. "*And it shall come to pass, that every* one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*"

At the season of the year when Israel kept the

* Every nation left, after those who came against Jerusalem are destroyed, q.d., left from amidst the overthrow.

Feast of Tabernacles, and to shew the true meaning of that typical ordinance, the Gentile nations shall come up, from year to year, by means of representatives, as Israel came up to Jerusalem in the person of their males. This feast is the only unfulfilled one of the great feasts of Israel. *Passover* was fulfilled at Christ's death, and *Pentecost* at the outpouring of the Spirit. But this feast represented the Lord *tabernacling with men*, and is fulfilled only when the "*Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.*" On the Transfiguration-hill, Peter almost unwittingly set forth this truth. He seemed to mean to say, Is not this the true joy of the Feast of Tabernacles? Is not the Lord here?

If we do not take ver. 5 as the real, literal *Coming of the Lord*, it would be difficult to say why *this feast* was thus to be kept now. But, admit his Coming to have taken place, and then it is like *the light*, shewing forth the spiritual light (ver. 7), and *the river*, the Holy Spirit's outpouring. The type and antitype are together.

And if *the King in his beauty* be manifested thus, will not their coming up to the feast be a continual test as to the state of their feelings toward Him? They might be apt to rejoice in his gifts, rather than in Himself; in his renewed earth, with its safety and felicity, rather than in

his own presence. Hence, this test is left. Will you leave your dwellings, and prefer the sight of *the King*? This going up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles may be a test of their obedience, and of love constraining them.

17. "*And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.* 18. *And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no * rain, there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen (the Gentiles) that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.* 19. *This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.*"

This need not necessarily be understood as declaring that there shall be some nations who shall neglect this duty. It is rather a declaration intended to *prevent the occurrence* of such a sin. It is a threatening hung over them, *if they were* to neglect it. Just as Heb. vi. 6, "If they shall fall away," or Heb. x. 26, "If we sin wilfully," warnings intended to prevent the evil, and not implying that it shall ever really occur. They are meant to keep us away from the brink of the precipice.

20. "*In that day shall there be upon the bells*

* "*Upon them also there shall be no rain;*" is the true rendering. *Egypt* is singled out as being the nearest kingdom.

of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD, and the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. 21. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD OF HOSTS, and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts."*

The prophecy ends with foretelling a most glorious and peculiar diffusion of holiness, not perhaps over the Gentiles to the same degree, but over Jerusalem and Judah. The bells that hang from the neck of the horses shall suggest to the passer-by the holiness of the Lord; probably meaning, that the man who was leading along his team of horses to the field shall be holy, and shall manifest in his demeanour and spirit such holiness as the *High Priests* alone once exhibited, when the mitre was on their brow and the bells on their robe. Every cooking vessel used by the priests in the house of the Lord shall then be handled with reverence

* Surely Dr. Henderson has altogether mistaken the drift of this passage. He says that its "design evidently is to teach, that when the Jews shall be restored to their own land there shall be no greater degree of holiness attaching to what was formerly accounted most sacred, than what will attach to the ornamental trappings of the horses." And so the cooking vessels are to be upon a par with the vessels that held the blood.

as deep as used to be the bowls full of sacrificial blood ; that is, those who prepare food there shall be full of holy feelings, and act with reverence as deep as did formerly the priests at the altar. Yes, this shall be so, even in the common dwellings of Judah ; so pure shall vessels there be, that any worshipper might use them as holy temple-vessels. And never more shall any profane person intrude into the house of the Lord. “ Of the rest durst no man join himself to them.” (Acts v. 13.)

Holy, holy days ! Each common dwelling of Israel as sacred as the sanctuary. Each man of Israel holy as the High Priest. Each vessel, and the horse-trappings, used in so holy a way, that it may be said, that upon all the people, and all they do, and all their possessions, might be written, “ *Holiness to the Lord.*”

“ Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts !
The whole earth is full of his glory !”

CHAPTER XIII.

PROOF OF THE PREMILLENNIAL COMING, FROM A FEW MISCELLANEOUS PASSAGES IN THE PROPHETS, ESPECIALLY DANIEL XII. 1—3.

THERE are many passages where the form of the Son of man appears, when once it is admitted that there is no Millennium before His Coming. To those who admit the Second Coming to be Premillennial, such passages appear infinitely more clear and easily understood on this principle than on any other, although it cannot be said that they are proofs of the question.

Of such a kind is Isaiah xi. 1—9. The two Comings of the Lord seem to us obviously contained in that passage. The *Person* is first set forth, anointed with the Spirit without measure. He appears as a “*rod out of the stem of Jesse,*” in opposition to the strong boughs of “*Lebanon cedars*” in the close of the preceding chapter. But, though thus lowly in his rise, he goes forth in the Spirit, revealing the Lord’s mind. Suddenly, we are

startled by his tremendous acts. At ver. 4, we are hurried on to the scenes of His Second Coming, when "He smites the earth with the rod of his mouth, and slays the wicked (שׂוֹנֵא the Wicked One) with the breath of his lips." If ver. 1 indicated a personal coming, surely there is no hint that He is not now also, in this scene, personally present. And the effect is, Paradise restored, vers. 6—8. Israel's land, "My holy mountain," * peculiarly blessed ; and the whole earth filled to the brim with the knowledge of the Lord—the glory of God in the face of Jesus, as Hab. ii. 14 indicates, compared with 2 Cor. iv. 6.

"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse,
 "Which shall stand for an ensign to the peoples;
 "To it shall the Gentiles seek. (Genesis xlix. 10.)
 "And His rest shall be glorious."

Such another is Jer. xxx. 21, "*And their nobles* (it should beyond doubt be "their Noble One,"

* Mr. Brown, page 200, first asserts that it is the wild beasts of the context that are not to "*hurt or destroy*;" and then says, that, since to take this literally would be absurd, the *wild beasts* of the context must mean "men's passions." We reply, that by a common, very common Hebraism, "*they shall not hurt*" is simply, "there shall be none to hurt." His other argument from the word "*for*," is the same as he uses on Isaiah lxxv. 17, proceeding on the error that "*for*" is exegetical instead of confirmatory; and besides, it falls to the ground if the right view of "*they shall not hurt*," be taken.

אֲדִירָו, Israel's excellent one) *shall be of themselves, and their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me. For who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord.*" This occurs at the time of Israel's restoration and conversion. They are represented as returned, full of joy. (Ver. 19.) But lo! in the midst of them, "*their Noble One,*" "*their Governor!*" And it is as if we saw Daniel vii. 13 realized; "They brought him near before him." As he approaches, the question is asked, "*Who is this?*" (מִי הוּא זֶה,) just as in Psalm xxiv. 8, 10. This is Israel's *King* in the midst of his ransomed nation. It is the *Priest*, too; for he is in the act of mediation. It is none other than Melchizedec. It is this Righteous One, our King, presenting himself for us.

Such a passage, too, is Ezekiel xxxvii. 24, 25. We have Israel in their own land. They are the people of the Lord now, and He is their God. Amid this scene, we find "*David my servant king over them*"—the well-beloved, (the דָּוִד of the Song of Solomon,) the "*servant* in whom his soul delighted." (Isaiah xlii. 1.) Nay, again it is declared, (ver. 25,) "My servant David shall be their Prince for ever." We might also adduce Ezek. xxi. 25, 27, "I WILL OVERTURN,

OVERTURN, OVERTURN, TILL HE COME whose right it is."

But we pass from such passages, and even from Daniel vii. 13, which we regard as one referred to by our Lord in Matt. xxvi. 64, when he told Pilate of "*the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven.*" We pass from all these passages to one which we regard as containing in it an irresistible proof of what we contend for.

In Daniel xii. 1—3, we are shewn the scene that ushers in the days of blessedness. Now, the preceding chapter spoke of nothing but war and trouble, ending in the ruin of the Wilful King. "*At that time Michael stands up in behalf of Israel, and Israel is delivered.*" This is the day of Israel's restoration and return to the Lord and to their inheritance.

But, *along with this*, there is another event. "*And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake ;*" some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. This is, beyond doubt, *The Resurrection*. Some one has called the dead from their graves. We do not stay to embarrass the one point we are now contending for by asking, Is this the General Resurrection, or is it the Resurrection of the Just? * It is enough

* We are satisfied that it is the latter. As in ver. 4, "*many*" is not *all*, so here. And we have Jewish authority

that it is the resurrection of those who were in their graves.

Now, this takes place *at the very time Israel is restored*. And all agree that the day of Israel's conversion is the day of Millennial blessedness. Yet here is that day ushered in by resurrection-scenes—many arising from their graves to everlasting life, to shine as the firmament and as the stars for ever.

Our Lord himself seems to have had this passage in his eye when he spoke of the "Resurrection of Life," and of the "Just shining forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. And, perhaps, the apostles and evangelists drew from this passage their use of the word "sleep" as a name for *death*. It may be, too, that Paul (1 Cor. xv. 41) had these words before his mind, when he said that in the

for understanding the one "אֵלֶּה," as meaning, "these who awoke," and the other "אֵלֶּה," "those who sleep still." And we do not reject the further solution of those who regard this prophecy as like that of Malachi iii. 1—3, and Isaiah xi. 1—9, where the Lord's First and Second Comings seem to crowd upon each other in the perspective of the painting. "Wherein it hath often seemed to me to resemble the blue wall of mountains which fills the eye at a distance with its uniform magnificence; but as you draw near, the range of little hills, and the mountain-groups, and link-spurs which join range to range, come distinctly out, and you ascend and ascend, and are involved amongst their stupendous grandeur, and behold that to be wondrously varied and infinitely magnificent which at first seemed but one flat curtain of blue, defined with one sharp line of irregular beauty."—*Irving*.

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resurrection, one glorified body would differ from another, as "one star differs from another star in glory."

It is admitted, however, that this is the Resurrection Morning. Now, who but *the Lord* himself raises the dead? "All that are in the graves hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth." (John v. 28.) The resurrection of both just and unjust is attributed to the voice of Christ. He is the resurrection. We know of no intimation in Scripture of ~~the~~ resurrection being produced by any other instrumentality than "the Lord descending from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God." (1 Thess. iv. 16.)*

Here, then, is our argument. Christ being himself, by his Personal Coming, the author of the resurrection, wherever the resurrection is mentioned, his real personal presence is implied. Now, in this passage of Daniel, the Resurrection occurs at the beginning of the Millennial days, and *immediately after* the fall of the Wilful King, ushering in the blessedness for which we wait. If so, then it is equally true that *Christ himself* comes at the beginning of the Millennial days, and ushers in the long season of blessedness.

* Some have doubted this, alleging that Matt. xxvii. 53 shews us saints raised already. But, *Christ was present then.*

CHAPTER XIV.

PROOF THAT THE SECOND ADVENT IS PRE-MILLENNIAL. OUR LORD'S PROPHECY.

OUR Master often spoke of His Second Coming, and often of the state of His Church till then. But never once has he on any occasion given a hint of any rest remaining for it, excepting the soul's rest in Himself, until He shall come again. There is not one hint in his parables or discourses of a thousand years of peace to His Church before He comes again. He gave many consolations to the little flock, but he never put that among them. On the contrary, the tenour of his words leads to the expectation of trouble in the earth and in the Church till He come.

During the few last days of his ministry, Jesus had been daily in the temple. At length, he took a solemn farewell of it and of Jerusalem, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate! For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of

the Lord!" Saying these words, he arose to depart. And in these circumstances the conversation and discourse that followed had their origin.

The Occasion of the Prophecy. (Matt. xxiv.)

Ver. 1. "*And Jesus went out and departed from the temple : and his disciples came unto him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.* Ver. 2. *And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.*"

His disciples saw their Master prepare to leave, and knew by his look that holy indignation and deep sorrow were struggling in his soul. They felt a wish to detain Him ; for if He left that temple for ever, they too must leave it : it could have few attractions to them if he should wither it by a final farewell. In their anxiety to detain Him, some of them came forward, and drew his attention to the magnificence of the structure. Jesus stopped one moment, and looked where they pointed, and then declared that soon not a stone of the buildings they pointed to (ὧδε, here, on this spot) should be left in its place. In saying this, he specially fixed his eye on the structure and its attractions, and asked, "See ye not ALL THESE THINGS?" ye shall soon see them no more.

They went forth of the temple and city, and

crossing the brook Cedron, slowly climbed the Mount of Olives, pondering things to come.

The two Questions put.

“And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy Coming, and of the end of the world?”
(ἀμωρος.)

It was probably near sunset. The setting sun would be shedding its slant rays over the temple, lending a type of that day's solemn scenes. Jesus sat on some green knoll of the hill, whence He could see the sanctuary, alone and buried in meditation. After some time a few of the disciples, who had been conversing together by the way upon the matter, ventured to come up to their Master, and reverently to ask *two questions*. The first was in reference to his own words, “*When shall THESE THINGS be?*” viz., the overthrow of the sanctuary, which of course involved Jerusalem itself in its ruin. The second (ver. 3) was a question suggested probably by chap. xxiii. 39, “*Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say.*” They asked before, “*And what shall be the sign of thy Coming and of the end of the world?*”—the end of *the age*, or Dispensation, during which such disasters were to occur.

Such were the two distinct questions. Our Lord encouraged the inquiry, and replied by stating, not any dates, or number of years, but certain events that would mark the time.

The Question as to the Ruin of Jerusalem answered.

Ver. 4. "*Jesus answered and said, Take heed that no man deceive you :* 5. *For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many.* 6. *And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars ; see that ye be not troubled ;** 7. *For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.* 8. *All these are the beginning of sorrows.*"

All this came to pass before Jerusalem was destroyed. False Messiahs abounded. Wars and conflicts were ever filling unhappy Syria with distress ; as when at Cæsarea, 20,000 of the Jews were slain by the Greeks, and 10,000 slaughtered at Damascus ; while the attempt of Caligula to put up his statue in the temple embittered the whole nation. And in the Roman Empire, Nero, Galba,

* A believer should exemplify Isaiah xxviii. 16, "*He that believeth shall not make haste.*" His faith keeps him from perturbation ; his eye resting on the bosom of his God. So Psalm cxii. 7.

Otho, Vitellius, reigned, and were cut off in turn. At Rome, Apamea, Crete, earthquakes occurred, greatly alarming the inhabitants; while Laodicea, Colossæ, and Hierapolis, were overwhelmed in ruins. Many *famines* are recorded, and *pestilences* followed in their train.

But these things bear chiefly on Israel. What of the *disciples* all this time?

Ver. 9. "*Then* (τοτε, at that time,) *shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.* 10. *And then* (τοτε) *shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.* 11. *And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.* 12. *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.* 13. *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.* 14. *And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come.*"

The persecution that followed the preaching of the Gospel in the whole Roman world is here foretold. It was to be preached "*ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ οἰκουμένῃ*," which in Luke ii. 1, is the Roman Empire; and "*all nations*," are the nations over whom that Empire swayed the sceptre. Paul, who was put to death at Rome in A.D. 66, could say, many years before, in writing to the Roman Christians, "Their sound

went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." (Rom. x. 18.) Thus, a fully preached Gospel, and the persecution of its heralds, were now both exhibited; and, said our Lord, "*Then*" (at that time, *τοτε*,) "*shall the end come.*" Such was to be the sign of Jerusalem's destruction. "*The end,*" is the ruin of the sanctuary and city.

Ver. 15. "*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand :) 16. Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains : 17. Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house : 18. Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days ! 20. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath-day.* 21. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved ; but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened.*"†

* Note here ; our Lord exhorts his disciples to pray that they may not need to flee on the Sabbath. If they did they would lose the blessed rest of that day. How plain it is that he wished them *always to enjoy a Sabbath-day.*

† "*Cut short,*" has often been characteristic of Jewish persecutions which seemed ready to extirpate the nation but

The "*holy place*" of ver. 15, is the "holy ground," i. e., the suburbs of the holy city. Cestius came near with his legions to Scopus, and then withdrew. Vespasian was on his way when Nero's death recalled him. These were warnings given to the disciples to leave the sinking city, although it was a sore trial to believing men to bid farewell to Jerusalem! and its thousand hallowed associations! If the many thousands (Acts xxi. 20) of believing Jews left the city at once, how solemn would be the testimony to those left behind! What sad partings! a father taking farewell of an unbelieving son, a mother of a daughter who risks her life in Jerusalem for the sake of its short-lived pleasures. But they do depart; and the wave of tribulation breaks with tremendous force on their poor forsaken city, and on their ruined temple.

Is it now, then, that the Lord will come to interfere for his ancient people? No; beware of thinking that it is at this time.

Caution against thinking that Christ was to come then.

Ver. 23. "*Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo! here is Christ, or there; believe it not.*" 24.

for the Lord's providential interferences. Here, it may mean, that "*those days of tribulation*" did not spread to the extent threatened. They cast their gloom over only some portions of Israel.

For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect. 25. Behold, I have told you before. 26. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: Behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. 27. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the Coming of the Son of man be. 28. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together."

The eagle, or vulture, scents, or sees its prey far off, and darts down upon it unerringly. This is a proverbial fact. Just so, then, with unerring certainty, all saints shall know *the Coming of the Son of man*. Will any saint not know Him in whom he has believed? Will they not all recognise their Lord? A Coming which no saint will fail to recognise, is spoken of. Our Lord says, Go not forth;—attend not to those who say, Lo! here is Christ; and lo! there! That is not my Coming if it needs any one to shew it to you. My Coming is as clear as the lightning's blaze.

It follows from this, that our Lord *guards us against supposing that his COMING was at the destruction of Jerusalem*. He then proceeds to answer the question as to when it is to be.

THE QUESTION AS TO THE TIME OF HIS COMING
ANSWERED.

Ver. 29. "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.* 30. And * then (τοτε,) shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven."

Probably, the "*Sign of the Son of man*" may be the bright cloud, such as that in which he ascended—as it is said, "He shall so come in like manner as we have seen him go into heaven." (Acts i. 11.) Luke xxi. 27, puts *the cloud* instead of *the sign*. However this may be, let us observe that our Lord having warned us in the preceding verse when *not* to expect him, tells, in ver. 29, when we *may* expect Him. It is as if he said, "Not at the time of Jerusalem's overthrow, but here is the mark" (εὐθεως δε BUT); "*Immediately after,*" &c. The words always mean, *next in succession to this—closely consequent upon this*.

What, then, have we here? We have Jeru-

* Remark, that here "then" is "τοτε." In 1 Cor. xv. 24, the terms are, "επειτα," and "εἰτα," which mean "*next in order,*" without defining the space intervening. But "τοτε," can only mean "*at that time.*"

saalem's overthrow or end (ver. 14), and its unparalleled tribulation (vers. 21, 22)—unparalleled in the history of nations either in its severity or long continuance. When *that long tribulation*, called here, "*The Tribulation of Those Days*," has run its course, then, without further delay, "The sun shall be darkened . . . and the sign of the Son of man" appear. Jer. xxx. 7—9, had written, "Alas! for that day is great so that none is like it, it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day that I will break his yoke. . . . But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king."

Our Lord's words are a reply to the second of the two questions put to him by his disciples; "*What shall be the sign of thy Coming?*" And in order to understand the mark of time which he gives, it is necessary to notice that the days of Israel's tribulation began in Jerusalem's destruction, but did not end there. Far from ending there, it was only then they commenced; and for eighteen centuries they have continued—the sea of their calamities at one time sinking into a comparative calm, and at other times lashed into furious storms. It will appear beyond doubt from Luke xxi. 25—27, that our Lord's view of the "*Tribulation of Those Days*" stretched over all that

space of many centuries, during which Israel's land has been trodden down and meted out, and the people a by-word among the nations.

It appears that this is the only way of explaining what is otherwise a startling discrepancy. Here, in ver. 21, it is said that this tribulation is such as never yet was equalled, "*No, nor ever shall be.*" But Dan. xii. 1, asserts that at the time of Israel's return there shall be trouble, "*Such as there never was since there was a nation.*" How can this tribulation be one that never is to be equalled, and yet that of Dan. xii. 1 be greater than any that ever preceded? There is just one solution. These are parts of one and the same tribulation. The multitudinous and long-lasting afflictions of eighteen centuries form to Israel one *Great Tribulation*.

Besides, it appears, that even as the first burst of the storm was terrific, so shall the last hour of it be, ere its strength is spent. And we can quite understand two individuals describing the *same storm*, the one dwelling on its first outburst, the other on the appalling scene at its close; while both say with equal truth that never was there such a storm as that which they described.

We now see the full meaning of our Lord's words. The *time of his Coming* is "*immediately after the tribulation of those days.*" There is to

be no rest till He comes. Century on century of trouble; deep calling unto deep; the roar of a storm never lulled into calm: such is his view of the days that precede his Coming. He tells of no Millennial rest before He comes. Nay, he puts that out of the question by saying, "Such shall be the season of trouble, and *immediately after . . . the sign of the Son of man.*"

Ver. 30. "*And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*"*

The Master is speaking without any gorgeous imagery, such as many attribute to the Old Testament prophets. When he spoke of the "*sun be darkened,*" &c., he speaks of what shall be the effects of his glorious Coming in darkening that luminary, and causing apparent revolution in all the heavenly bodies; as it will on earth below. He is speaking of the most solemn, overawing, mar-

* Mr. Brown thinks *all this may* refer to Jerusalem's destruction! And to make this more probable, he has taken pains to apply Joel's "great and terrible day" (ii. 31), to Jerusalem; as also Mal. iv. 1, 5. It is playing into the hands of the theologians for any man to fritter away "*Coming in the clouds with great glory,*" and "*Sending forth his angels with the great sound of a trumpet to gather his elect,*" into judgments on a Jewish, and then on a Gentile apostasy!! Try Psalm xxii. on this same principle.

vellous event that earth shall ever witness; and no words but the very plainest and calmest were suitable, in setting forth such amazing realities. With the same calm, simple, plain historic truth with which at another time he said of Jerusalem, "*Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee,*" he says on this occasion to his disciples, that "*Immediately after the tribulation of those days, they shall see the Son of man!*" The four favoured disciples who sat at his side as He said these words, *Andrew*, the first that followed Him, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, who were with Him in all the greatest scenes of his life—could not attach more meanings than one to their Master's language. They knew what it was to look upon "*the Son of man.*"

Ver. 31. "*And He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*"

Such shall be the "end of the world" (*αιῶνος*)—of "this present evil world" (*αἰῶνος*)—or Age. His saints shall be gathered from the midst of an evil world, and shall "meet Him in the air,"* in

* 1 Thess. iv. 17. "*εἰς ἀπάντησιν,*" to meet, and then go back with him, as did Paul's friends who met him (Acts xxviii. 15, *εἰς ἀπάντησιν*) at Appii Forum, and turned back with him to Rome.

order to be with Him for ever, wheresoever He may fix his seat.

A parable containing a conjunct view of both events.

32. "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree. When his branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: 33. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things (the "παντα τὰυτα" of ver. 2), know that it is near, even at the doors. 34. Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things (the "παντα τὰυτα" of vers. 2 and 33) be fulfilled. 35. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. 36. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

The destruction of Jerusalem and the tribulation begun in right earnest, correspond to the budding of the fig-tree. When they should see "*these things*," viz., the ruin of the holy place, (as mentioned ver. 2), come to pass, with its attendant tribulation, then "*the summer*," viz., the sunshine Day of Christ's appearing might be reckoned upon as on its way. The time of Song ii. 8, 9, may be reckoned nigh. Our version misleads the reader here, by putting the words in so emphatic a form, "Near, *even* at the doors." It is "ἐγγυς ἐπὶ θύραις," which is more properly rendered, "Near, at the doors." This expression means it is *near*, in the

sense of being *at the threshold*, without declaring that it shall immediately enter, or come in. No other event is to be looked for amid that tribulation but the Coming of the Lord to end it. The apostle James, v. 8, and many others, use the very term “*ἔρχυς*,” to express the Lord’s Coming as an event in full prospect, in their day.

There have been many ways of explaining “*This generation shall not pass away*,” but the above interpretation retains the common and obvious sense. Ere that generation were all gone from the earth, “*these things*,” viz., the scenes of destruction, the temple and city laid low, were fulfilled. And (as has been observed by others) the fulfilment of “*these things*” was like the bursting asunder of Jeroboam’s altar (1 Kings xiii. 3), a pledge that the rest of the prophecy should be fulfilled in its time, centuries after.

This Coming will take the world by surprise.

37. “*But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.* 38. *For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,* 39. *And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.* 40. *Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left.* 41. *Two women shall be*

grinding at the mill ; the one shall be taken and the other left."

Surely it is clear as noon-day, that the world is taken by surprise, long ere it thought of his Coming. Perhaps, the very theory of a Millennium intervening between them and his Coming lulled them asleep. There is nothing here like Millennial rest before He comes, nor like Millennial holiness, No ; tribulation on tribulation, wave upon wave, and sin added to sin,—days like Noah's days ! The world is suffering and sinning as before,—eating and drinking,—when lo ! the Son of man appears.

A call to watchfulness.

He is not speaking now of Jerusalem's ruin, nor is He referring to our death ; He is speaking of his *Coming in glory*, all suddenly.

" 42. WATCH, therefore : for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 43. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. 44. Therefore be ye also ready : for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. 45. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season ? 46. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. 47. Ve-

rily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. 48. But, and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming ; 49. And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken ; 50. The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51. And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites : there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

After this, the Lord spoke the parable of the *ten virgins* and the *talents*, and narrated the *judgment scene*. This closed the solemn discourses of that day.

We do not enter upon Mark xiii., where the same prophecy is repeated, because its details are so completely coincident with those of Matthew. Only observe, how important this prophecy must be that is so often taken up and recorded. O, that an unthinking world would give heed to it ! There is double testimony. Nay, let us see in Luke xxi. a third witness.

LUKE XXI.

In ver. 5 he tells us more fully, that it was "the

goodly stones and gifts*” that were pointed out to Jesus by his disciples to attract and engage his attention, and, if possible, detain him in the Temple still. He enables us to define with yet more certainty the “*these things*” of Matthew xxiv.; for, in ver. 6, it is written, “As for *these things which ye behold*,” viz., the stones and gifts,—the gorgeous structure of the sanctuary.

The question of the disciples is given in a new shape, ver. 7. It is, *first*, as to the time when “these things” should be, viz., the ruin of Jerusalem’s glory; and, *secondly*, as to what they might expect to follow on this event. For this is the sense of ver. 7; “And what shall be the sign when these things come to pass?” The questions, however, are substantially the same as in Matthew.

The features of the near approach of the time of Jerusalem’s ruin are mentioned vers. 8—11. We need only notice that ver. 8 should be understood thus, “Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time (of their doing so) is near.” And verse 10 reads thus, “*At that time* (said He to them) *nation shall rise against nation*.”

From vers. 11—19 He foretels that their perse-

* The “gifts and goodly stones” have long since disappeared; it is only the *unadorned* stones, such as those of outer walls and foundations, that are now to be seen.

cution shall begin before Jerusalem's tribulations begin. Indeed, their persecutions shall be a sign of that ruin approaching.

In ver. 20—24 we have the marks of its arrival. The armies, the legions of Rome, have come. Jerusalem falls. She is led captive, and trodden down. The Gentiles enter into possession, and the "TIMES OF THE GENTILES" now run their course. These are "The *Days of Vengeance*," ver. 22.

When the "times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled, "*there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. For the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then (τοτε, at that time,) shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory.*" (Vers. 25—27.) It is amidst such awful scenes that the Lord comes. Since the days of Jerusalem's vengeance Israel has never known rest; and as the "*times of the Gentiles*," draw to a close, the distresses of the Gentiles also are very great. Amid such scenes the Lord comes; not amid Millennial rest, but to calm incessant turmoil and uninterrupted trouble.

"And," says the Lord, ver. 28, "When *these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift*

up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." When you see these events coming on, be not cast down; your hope is not lost. Though the Temple perish ("these things," ver. 6), yet to you has dawned a better hope. The very ruin of that Temple is to you a pledge of the Coming of Him that is greater than the Temple. "Your *redemption draweth nigh,*"—is in full prospect on the horizon.

Then follow the parable and the warning. O that our age would hear the cry of verse 34! "Take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be overcharged with *surfeiting, and drunkenness, and the cares of this life.*" It is as if our Master had his eye on the state of society in our land—rich and poor. In such an hour He comes. "*As a snare*" that springs up, ere ever the foot that touched it is aware. Such is the season of his Coming. Earth needs no other, and shall get no more emphatic, warning as to the signs of the day of Christ.

We remark, then, on these chapters, (which may be called "*loci classici*" in regard to this subject), that there is not one hint of a Millennium *before* Christ comes the second time; and that there is a very clear announcement to the contrary running throughout them all. He that said to our souls,

"Come unto me, and I will give you rest," let us know that when *He comes to us* He will bring *rest to our earth*. His own personal Coming in the clouds is the dawn of the day of rest—the Sabbath of our world.

CHAPTER XV.

SOME MISCELLANEOUS PASSAGES IN PROOF OF THE PREMILLENNIAL COMING.

THERE are passages adduced on both sides about which we are inclined to take a view somewhat different from either. Such is the "*Parable of the Tares*," Matt. xiii. 24—30. The value of this parable in *the present controversy* has been over-rated, because the true bearing of it has been mistaken. 1. It is not fitted to be used as a proof of more than the state of things in the Church *up to the time of the Second Coming*. It shall be in a mixed, impure state till the Harvest come. But it does not enter upon the question as to what may be the state of the Church *during the time of the kingdom*. It is here that Mr. Brown fails in his argument. He urges the unwarranted inference, that if the tares then existing are taken out of the field, of course, there can be nothing of evil left ; and then Premillennialists must hold that there shall be *unmixed good* over all the earth

during the Millennium. Our reply, however, is, that the parable does not give any information on that subject. The *Canaanites* were rooted out of Palestine; and yet there were other sources of evil, and other kinds of evil men. So it *might be* here.

2. This parable only shows *one kind of evil* as existing till the Lord come, viz., *imitation of the good seed*.^{*} It is to warn us of troubles and perils from false teachers in the Church. It is exceedingly like the second chapter of 1 John, warning us of "many Antichrists," many imitations of, and substitutes for Christ during the whole period of the last days. But, says the parable, "at the harvest," i. e., as we understand it, at the Lord's Coming, all these shall be plucked up. There is no promise of rest to believers till then, no security against this vexation. But it ends on that day. We gather from it that in the Millennial age there shall not exist *this form* of evil anywhere. *Antichrists* are for ever gone. *Tares* shall never more grow with the wheat. This shall be on earth at the time when "the just are shining as the sun in the kingdom;" they shall look upon a world free from this curse, which used to be their deepest sorrow.

So Matt. xiii. 47—50, the *Parable of the Fishes*. The outward appearance of the "*bad*"

* Chrysostom describes the ζιζανιον, as, weeds in appearance closely resembling the good wheat.

fish” was not different from that of the good. They represent the hypocrites, or mere professors, in the Church. Shall we never come to a time when there shall be no pretenders to faith? no Sapphira? no Ananias? no Simon Magus? Never till “the *end of the world*” (*ἀνω*)—this dispensation. Bear up till then. Do not fret because of evil-doers. Do not expect more at present than the Lord authorizes you to do. But on that day, you and they shall be for ever separated, and *they* shall have “wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

These parables tell us the end of the present race of false teachers and mere professors. They do not go on so far as to say, whether there shall ever after that be any other thorns round “the Lily”—his Church. Their object is to fix our hope and desire on the coming of the *Lord himself*, and not upon the prosperous state or large numbers of the visible Church.

But proceeding to state some miscellaneous proofs, we fix upon

LUKE XVII. 20—37.

The question started was, “When shall *the kingdom* of God come?” Now, it was *Pharisees* who started this question,—men who needed to learn the nature and characteristics of those who should inherit it, instead of anxiously prying into the *time* of it. They were not like the four disciples

on the Mount of Olives asking, "Master, when shall these things be?" The inquirers were self-righteous men, who hated the King of that coming kingdom. Accordingly our Lord, as his manner was toward all such, replied to them not directly, but in the most useful way; just as he replied to the question, "Are there few that be saved?" by saying, "Strive to enter." His reply was addressed to the Pharisees, "*The kingdom of God cometh not with observation,*" that is, cometh not in a way that strikes the eyes and senses of spectators. Its beginning is not like the pomp of kings when they take possession of dominion. It is plain that Jesus is not here speaking of the *Millennial kingdom*, for in any view, *that kingdom* will be "*with observation;*" every eye on earth being cognisant of the immense change upon the face of the world. But he is speaking of the characteristics of that kingdom, and how it comes into a man's possession. They ask, "*When* will it come?" He speaks to them of "*How* it first comes into a man's possession." "*Neither shall they say, Lo, here, or Lo, there; for behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*" It is not a kingdom such as men have been accustomed to. It is not one that makes progress by external conquests, so that the news run, "Lo! this place is in the Conqueror's hands, and lo! that other has fallen." On the contrary, its nature is so different from that of human kingdoms, that it is "*within*

you," that is, its first advance is to the capture of your souls.

Having thus replied, in the most befitting way, to the *Pharisees*, Jesus took up their question again in its proper meaning, and gave the direct answer of it to his *Disciples*. To them who knew the nature of his kingdom so far, He does not refuse to give some note of the *time when*. And let us now see what that mark is.

22. "*And he said unto the disciples, The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.* 23. *And they shall say unto you, See here ; or, See there : go not after them, nor follow them.* 24. *For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven, so shall also the Son of man be in his day.*"

The drift of these verses is this. You shall soon be left without my personal presence ; the Bridegroom shall be taken from you. Often, during my absence, you shall wish back again those days of the Son of man—even one of those happy days—when we spoke together of the things of God. You will then be disposed to wish my Coming again were near, and may be liable to the attempts of false prophets. But of this be sure, that my Coming again will be so evident and plain to every eye, that none shall need to say, "Lo, here," or "Lo, there."

We cannot fail to notice the resemblance this passage bears to the warnings given regarding false prophets previous to the destruction of Jerusalem, ch. xxi. 8. But here he speaks entirely of his Second Coming.

Ver. 25. "*But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.* 26. *And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man.* 27. *They did eat, they drank; they married wives, they were given in marriage: until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.* 28. *Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot. They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded:* 29. *But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.* 30. *Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.*"

The drift of these verses is plainly this:—You are not to expect the kingdom of the Son of man until He has suffered and been rejected. (Compare xix. 11.) And as He found men treating Him at his First Coming, so shall He find them at his Second. The earth shall resemble the days of Noah, and the times of Lot, at the season of his being revealed from heaven again.

It is here we see the proof of his Coming being Premillennial. The Lord gives as the sign of it,

not a season of a thousand years' rest and holiness to the earth, but a season of wickedness like that before the flood. The Lord speaks nothing of earth ready at his Coming to welcome Him; but, on the contrary, it is to be as in the days of Lot, when they were fain to thrust out that one righteous reprove of their sin. But if a thousand years of holy peace had already filled earth to the very brim, "as the waters cover the sea," could this state of things possibly exist? For does not Rev. xx. 9 tell us that "*A camp of saints*" and "*a beloved city*" stand forth pre-eminent *after* the thousand years? Let any man read Rev. xx. 9, 10, and say where any resemblance to Noah's days, and far less to the days of Lot, can be traced.

Our Lord seems to give us in this passage the warning that his Coming shall take earth by surprise amid its increasing wickedness. Are our days not like Noah's and Lot's? Our cities are becoming as godless and vicious as Sodom; and the world at large is as thoughtless of a deluge coming as in the days before the flood of water. *This is the very sign.*

In what follows from ver. 31—37, many things again strike us as resembling the prophecy delivered on the Mount of Olives. Perhaps we should gather from this resemblance that there shall be very

much in the state of the Gentile kingdoms—Christendom—at his Coming that will admit of the same admonition as was given at the time when the Jewish kingdom ended. In ver. 31, we find the warning that the man must be ready *at the moment* to leave all, not one lingering covetous desire left. In ver. 34, we see two men reclining at a feast on the same couch; when, lo! the flash of the Coming of the Lord, and one is taken up to meet the Lord, the other perishes.

In ver. 37, the disciples in eager alarm, say, “Where, Lord?” The Lord uses in reply the proverbial saying about the eagles finding the carcase, but applies it in *this instance* to his finding his own as surely as ever did the eagle scent or see its prey. In Matt. xxiv. 28, he seems to apply the proverb rather to *their finding Him*. Beautiful reciprocation! He surely finds them! They as surely find Him on that day.

LUKE XVIII. 8.

The argument here is very much the same as in the preceding passage. It is this. The Lord asks, “*Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith in the earth?*” and He does so, in connexion with his elect *praying unceasingly* for deliverance till that time. Is not this an intimation that they remain oppressed till then? They have

no deliverance from their widowed state till then. No Millennial times of joy, no avenging of their foes, *until the Son of Man cometh*. And "*when He cometh*," He finds nothing that indicates that previously the earth had been brimful of holiness—nothing that shewed that but lately it had been "full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the seas." No; He finds not any "*camp*,"—any firm, united host of saints—nor any "*beloved city*" (Rev. xx. 9); but, on the contrary, He looks over earth, and amid the endless mass of chaff for the fire, can scarcely discern any grains of pure wheat. Does this not show that He comes *before* the Millennial days have dawned? And his few waiting Simeons and Annas are driven off every shore of hope, and shut up to the Author and Finisher of their faith. The widow's only stay is in Him, and to her thus helplessly looking to Him alone, He appears.

ACTS III. 19—21.

"Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when (ὅπως ἂν) the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you. Whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all

things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

Without entering on the many disputes that have arisen regarding this passage, we shall state what we believe to be the true sense and interpretation of it, and defend it. We do not, however, agree in the mode of proving the Premillennial view from it adopted by many of our friends.

We conceive the passage to run thus. Peter, in his address to the Jews of Jerusalem, remembers his Lord's words, "Ye shall not see me henceforth *till* ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Matt. xxiii. 39.) This Christ (he says) is the Lord's anointed, though ye slew Him. In so doing ye acted ignorantly; but God thereby fulfilled all the more his purposes regarding Jesus, and Jesus is thereby all the more evidently the Christ of God. Since this is so, "*Repent and be converted, in order to the pardon of your sins*" (ἐἰς το ἐξαλειφθῆναι). And to give additional weight to his call, he declares what would be the result were they as a people so to do. "*Repent and be converted in order that (ὅπως ἂν) times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send Jesus Christ, who has been before preached unto you.*" The words "ὅπως ἂν ἔλθωσι καὶ ἀποστείλῃ," admit of no other rendering than "IN ORDER THAT." See Matt. vi. 5; Luke

ii. 35; Acts xv. 17; and other instances quoted by lexicographers.* The Syriac version renders the sentence as we have given it.

Peter has in view the Old Testament predictions which connect the national conversion of Israel with blessing to the whole earth. Such is Micah v. 7, where Israel is spoken of as "*dew*" and as "*showers*" to the nations, refreshing the withered earth. And while he had these passages in view, he also remembered his Lord's words, "Ye shall not see me henceforth *till* ye shall say, Blessed," from which he inferred that they would see him again as soon as they did call him blessed.

It is in this way that Peter is led to state the conversion of Israel, the times of refreshing, and the return† of Christ, *as three cotemporaneous events*. This is surely a very remarkable proof in our favour.

But it may be objected, Why, then, did Peter add the clause that follows, "*Whom the heavens must receive,*" &c. ? We suppose the object of that clause

* The instances alleged by Parkhurst, and others, of the sense "*when*," do not apply, for they have "*ὅπως*" only, not "*ὅπως αὖν*."

† Here, as in 1 Thess. iv. 14, the *Father* is represented as sending Jesus to us the second time, as well as at his First Coming, as if to teach us the love of Godhead. The same Father that sent him to die for our sins, sends him to fetch us home to glory.

may be thus stated. The Jews to whom he was preaching might at this point of the address have said, "*Shew us that Christ, if he is indeed risen, and is indeed so exalted.*" This objection the apostle obviates by saying, "He is now in the heavens above ; he was received into glory ; and will remain there until the times of restitution come. And it is for you, O house of Israel, to say whether these times shall begin now or not."* We do not think the word "restitution," ἀποκαταστασις, has special reference here to the renovation of the earth ; it is rather its *moral and spiritual* restitution. It seems to us plain that this is the direct sense, if we are to be guided by the usage of the New Testament writers. The verb from which this word comes is the term used in reference to John the Baptist "*restoring all things.*"† And is not this the most probable sense of the noun which in the New Testament occurs here only ? If so, Peter is still carrying on the argument for their repentance founded on the expected results—"that times of refreshing" may come to the earth—that

* Viewing it as a matter of human responsibility—looking at the iron and not the brazen side of the statue.

† See Matthew xvii. 11, Mark ix. 12. This true sense is given by *John Knox* in that passage of his "*Treatise on Fasting,*" where he says, "What were this else but *to reform the face of the whole earth?* which never was, nor yet shall be, till that righteous King and Judge appear *for the restoration of all things.*"

Jesus may be sent—that the heavens into which He is gone may no longer detain Him, because then will be the times of “*the restoring of all things*,” which the Forerunner of Christ in vain came to accomplish, but which Christ shall effectually bring in. Then follows the clause, “*which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his prophets since the world began*.” This falls in with all we have already seen. The apostle declares that this “*restoring all things*” has been the burden of the prophetic song since the world began. And is it not so? Is not the very first promise of the woman’s seed a prophetic notice of this “Restoring of all things?” “He shall bruise thy head.”

But, it is objected by Mr. Brown, that the words mean that these times must have taken place ere he came, q. d., the heavens must receive Him until everything *has been restored*. We reply, that to give this sense to the words is altogether arbitrary. Would he like any one to interpret Heb. ix. 10 in the same manner? Were these ceremonies imposed on them “*until the times of reformation*” had run their whole course? No; it was only up to the moment when these better times began. The words simply, that the moment the hour struck on the turret of eternity which declared “the times of restoration” arrived, that moment Jesus would be ready to come down from these heavens. Nor is there one word to authorize the gloss that “*who was before preached unto you*”

means that he will not be preached *after* he has appeared in glory.* Its force is, that same Jesus who has been preached to you in the days wherein he is absent in glory, shall be sent then to bring you all the fulness of blessing that is treasured up in Him. His Coming is not referred to by way of threatening, but by way of hope and encouragement.

It is thus we deduce from this somewhat obscure passage our proof of the Premillennial Coming. Peter sets before us as *cotemporaneous* these four things—*Israel's conversion, times of refreshing* to the whole earth, the *return of Christ*, the *restoring of all things* to a right moral and spiritual condition. Our eye is still kept on the *Lord Himself* as our hope in these last days. He was the beginning of our confidence, he is in all respects the finisher too.

1 JOHN II. 18, 28.

"Little children, it is the last time. And as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time."

We just stay to notice that last clause. The

* The best critics now prefer "*προκεχειρισμενον*" ordained, appointed beforehand for you. Jesus was "*King of the Jews.*" He was "*raised up to them*" (Ezek. xxxiv. 29), as a Plant of Renown, as it is written, Acts iii. 26, "*To you first.*" Either reading is the same to our argument.

last days are, as all agree, the times between Christ's First and Second Coming. Now, the distinctive feature of these days is *not a thousand years of rest—a millennium of holiness*—but, the *abounding of Antichrists*. In other words, *till Christ come*, (ver. 28,) we need hope for nothing else than evil men and seducers in the Church continually appearing, and waxing worse and worse. The Master Himself must be our hope.

REVELATION XI. 15, 18.

Upon this we might safely dwell. But as many would not be satisfied with its evidence, on account of its being found amid the symbolical prophecies, we are content with simply stating our argument from it. It runs thus.

The *seventh* angel sounds his trumpet, and that *seventh trumpet* is the last. Up to that seventh trumpet, all had been woe, woe, woe (viii. 13). But, *at the moment when the last trumpet sounds*, “the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.”

Now, *at that same time when “the kingdoms become the Lord’s,” the dead are judged*, i. e., the dead saints: they are rewarded, small and great that feared his name. (Ver. 18.) *Millennial days* and the *Resurrection Morning* go together; or, in other words, Millennial days and the Appearing of Christ

who is "the Resurrection and the life." He will on that day at once raise the bodies of his sleeping saints to honour and glory, and also show himself as the giver of spiritual life by quickening through his Spirit whole nations and kingdoms over all the earth.

CHAPTER XVI.

PROOF THAT THE SECOND ADVENT IS PRE-MILLENNIAL. THE PROPHECY 2 THESS. II.

THIS passage is very important, inasmuch as the time of the Second Advent is the very subject of discourse. Both in private conversation when among them (ver. 5), and in his first epistle written to them from Corinth, Paul had said much regarding "The Coming of the Lord, and our gathering together unto Him." About a year after his first epistle, and the time of his visit to them, false teachers had arisen, who tried to gain influence and notoriety by alarming statements regarding the Second Advent, pretending that their statements were authorized by Paul. Their statement was, that "*the day of Christ was set in*" (*ἐνεστηκε*), meaning, (as Grotius and others have understood the terms,) that that very year He was to come. In short, they acted the part of false prophets, saying, "Lo! Christ is here! and, lo! He is there!"

This called forth the second epistle to the Thessalonian Church, and this portion of it in particular.

Ver. 1. "*Now we beseech you, brethren, by the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him,* 2. *That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled,* neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.* 3. *Let no man deceive you by any means.*"

It is probably best, as it is most natural, to understand the word "*by*" (*ὑπερ*)† as a strong form of entreaty. It is as if he said (writes the continuator of Zanchius' Commentary on this Epistle), "I adjure and implore you—by all that is desirable and sweet in the Coming of Christ, which you as saints feel to be more precious than all other things, as it is then you hope and believe you will come with Him and be glorified—I adjure you not to be led away by these teachers." In the real Coming itself there will be elements to calm and establish the soul that cannot exist in a mistaken alarm regarding it. As you value, then, the real Coming, with all its store of joy, do not give place to any misrepresentation of it.

The anxiety of Paul was to keep the Thessa-

* The very word used, Matt. xxiv. 6, by our Lord as to similar circumstances.

† *Bretschneider* and others quote Homer's *Iliad* xxiv. 465, and Apoll. Rhod. iii. 701, where "*λίσσασθαι ὑπερ*" occurs in the sense of "entreating the person by," or "in the name of."

lonians from giving heed to error, and from being thrown into confusion of soul. The latter is a state of soul the opposite of calm faith; it is looking on the waves and growing alarmed, instead of looking at Christ. And the former can never be sanctifying, even though men might say, "It is fitted to rouse, it is fitted to shake men out of slumber." Being an *error*, it could not be blessed; for the Holy Spirit uses *the truth* in sanctification. "Do not, then," says Paul, "be deceived by any means, as if I had had a revelation of the Spirit to the effect that that day was set in; or as if I had said so in conversation; or as if I had ever written so." Paul and other apostles often said "εγγίζει," "It is near,"—but never, "It is really set in; this is the very year of it" (ἐνεστηκε).

See here the importance of *the truth* being adhered to. I could not expect to be blessed were I to preach, "*The day of Christ* WILL come this year;" for that is not revealed in the word. But I do expect to be blessed in preaching "*The day of Christ* MAY come this year;" for the Scriptures authorize the statement of this uncertainty.

Ver. 3. "*For that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the son of perdition.*"

Paul's precise object now seems to be to tell the Thessalonians, first, when Christ would not come,

and, then, "in *connexion with what events*" Christ would come. Mr. Brown, however, broadly denies the latter, and says, that Paul's whole object was to shew *when He would not come*.* Surely, we are to gather Paul's object by what he actually does show. An inspired writer will not show more than he meant to show; and if Paul *does show more than when Christ would not come*, surely it was all along his *intention* to do so? And yet Mr. Brown, in a strain that appears to us disrespectful to the inspiration of the passage, and fitted to gratify a Neologian, hesitates not to say, "*He is drawn out*, by the mention of the Man of Sin, into this *new subject*;"† and then, "*Absorbed by the subject* into which Christ's Personal Advent had drawn him," &c.‡ What does all this mean? Did the Holy Ghost not anticipate and intend every clause of the passage? We venture to ask, Would a theory, so unlike Mr. B.'s usual regard for the inspired word, have been propounded, except in order to get quit of a difficulty? And farther we ask, Will he undertake to show not simply that his view *may be* true, but that no other view can be the true one? Will he boldly attempt to shew that his theory *must be* the only meaning intended?

But, leaving this point, we find Paul saying that that day will not come except there come a

* P. 274.

† P. 274.

‡ P. 275.

"falling away"—an apostacy—a defection from the faith. This took place very early; and out of these corruptions of the early Church arose *"The Man of Sin"*—the system of Popery. As Jesus was a *"Man of Sorrows,"* q. d., every sorrow had a place in Him; so this system of evil is spoken of in its head as *"Man of Sin,"* q. d., every error, every sin, had a place therein. Also; he is to be Judas-like in his ways and in his end; *"son of perdition"*—deserving perdition by reason of his covetous, hypocritical ways, and finding his own place at last. For Popery does not end by its votaries being drawn away from its pale by conversion. No; Judas was never converted, neither shall this be the way of bringing Popery to its end. Its end is violence and judgment—a tremendous doom that shall cause all Christendom to be an *"Aceldama."*

Ver. 4. *"Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."*

This marks out the Man of Sin more clearly. He is *"one that opposeth"*—an adversary. The word *"ἀντικείμενος,"* is used by the Sept. in Zech. iii. 1, for the Hebrew verb *"לִבְזֹת"*; and, besides, it was fitted to suggest *"Ἀντιχριστος."* Next; he *"exalts himself above all that is called God,"* namely, judges, princes, kings, (see John x. 35);

and "*above all that is worshipped*"—above all adoration that Heathens ever gave to their idols or their deified heroes.

And his rise shall be thus. He shall come in and "*sit in the temple*" of God, as if he were only a worshipper, or at most a teacher; like our Lord in John viii. 2. Soon, however, this teacher in the temple* appears in a new character; he claims to be the Lord of the temple; he exhibits himself as if he were God; he seems to say, "The Lord whom you seek has come to his temple." (Mal. iii. 10.)

The Pope has deposed kings and excommunicated kingdoms; this is known in all the earth. The Pope used to be styled in the Decretals, "*Our Lord God the Pope*." Bellarmine contended that "even if the Pope should err by enjoining vices and prohibiting virtues, yet the Church was bound to believe that to be vice and virtue which he had said was so." Up to this hour, what an exhibition of himself does he give "*as if he were God*," when, on festivals, often 150,000 people kneel before him in the great square of St. Peter's at Rome.

The falling away then, has come; and the Man

* One of the Reformers notices that it was he who, to conceal himself the more, invented the stories that Antichrist was Nero; or that he was to be a man of the tribe of Dan; or born in Chorazin; was to rebuild Jerusalem, &c. Thus while men's eyes were looking in another direction, Antichrist came into the temple of God. (Jewell.)

of Sin is revealed. The Coming of Christ MIGHT now be at hand; for that intervening event has occurred.

Ver. 5. "*Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?*"

Though Paul was only three weeks at Thessalonica, yet observe how he instructed them in prophetic truth.

Ver. 6. "*And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (hindereth) will let, until he be taken out of the way.*"

All the early Christians believed that the Roman empire was that "*Which withholdeth;*" and it became customary to pray for the upholding of the Roman empire in order to avert the coming of Antichrist. It is stated by Machiavelli, that no sooner was the seat of empire transferred to Constantinople, than the power of the Church of Rome began to augment, while that of the empire declined.

The Pope came in very subtly. As in the "*Mystery of godliness,*" so in this "*Mystery of iniquity*"—appearances were not what they seemed. In the "*Mystery of godliness*" you saw a babe in the manger; but that is Jehovah, the Ancient of Days. You saw tears, and heard groanings and cries; but these produce joy unspeakable. You

saw a cross ; but it is the step to a throne. You saw Jesus in the weakness of death, and Satan's plot succeeding ; but this defeat is victory, and the success of Satan "bruises his head." As if to mimic this *mystery*, behold Satan's skill in Popery. The Pope admits every truth in the Bible, and yet advances other doctrines that destroy these truths. He pretends to hold up the immense merits of Jesus alone, and yet sells these very merits. He pretends a superior, an almost divine, sanctity in not allowing priests to marry ; but under this cloak (says Jewell) was hid "the vilest villany that ever crept into the Church of God. It was a gulf, it was a sea, it was a world, it was a hell of iniquity." The Pope so bewildered men, that while learned men wrote against *Antichrist* with deepest hatred, they were all the time embracing his doctrine. He deceived priests, bishops, archbishops, princes, kings, emperors, the gravest, the wisest, the most learned in the world. He called himself "*servant of the servants of God*," and yet ruled over nations and over the professing Church of God with a rod of iron. "*Mystery of iniquity !*"

It doth "*already work*." The ambition of such as Diotrefes, and of the false teachers in Thessalonica was the same leaven ; and the more worldly the Church became, it was the more prepared to be beguiled and led along by "the Man of Sin."

Ver. 8. "*And then shall that wicked (ἀνομος) be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.*"

That "Wicked" or "Lawless One," is the same whom Daniel speaks of as "doing according to his will, and exalting and magnifying himself above every God." (Dan. xi. 36.) He was "*revealed*" whenever the Roman empire declined, in his first development. But he assumed many forms ; and it was long ere the hideous mass of wickedness in him was disclosed. Century after century passed, and still this "*man of sin,*" this "*mystery of iniquity,*" had not discovered all his craft, and filth, and cruelty, and fascination, and hatred of God. It took many centuries to "*reveal*" any of his features fully. But in many respects, they have now been fully discovered—the very halls of the inquisition have been searched into, and its secrets divulged. It seems from many hints elsewhere, that there may still be some more hideous form of evil "*revealed*" through this Mystery of Iniquity, at its last stage. With the aid of Infidelity, it may yet assume a new and more terrific aspect, and shake its rod of iron over the world. This may be so ; and this passage may include the last development of evil when Infidelity and Popery join against the Lamb. But meanwhile, we certainly see that mys-

tery of iniquity revealed to an amazing extent, and may well stand on our watch-tower.

It is asserted here that his end shall come by violence—by the Lord's stroke of wrath. "*Whom the Lord shall consume by the spirit of his mouth.*" The word "*consume*" used to be interpreted by the Reformers as the wasting away of Popery by means of its adherents being withdrawn from it by the word of the Gospel. We might concede this ; only we see "*consume*" used in Luke ix. 54, for judgment by fire ; and "breath," or "*spirit of his mouth*" is what Isaiah xi. 4 says shall "*slay the wicked.*" The Scholiast, too, renders this expression "his command," ἐπιταγήα; he gives the word, and the destruction comes.

It is, however, the latter clause that is most important. The continuator of Zanchius (whom we quote because writing in days when men had no Millennial bias) adopts the above interpretation of the former clause, and says here, "*Loquitur non de adventu per prædicationem verbi, sed de ultimo adventu ad judicium ; quod et epitheton 'Illustris Adventus,' ostendit.*"

The Lord shall "*destroy him,*" (abolish, thoroughly consume,) when he has revealed himself in all his wickedness. And how shall he destroy him ? "*By the brightness (ἐπιφάνεια) of His Coming.*" Some render this, "by the *outshining* of his

Coming." It is peculiar, as if intended to fix attention on Christ's *appearing in glory*, to destroy his enemy.

Here, then, we have reached the point at which we find Paul returning to the subject with which he started, viz., the Coming of Christ in connexion with the events that were to precede it. He had said, that Christ would not come until there was a revelation of the Man of Sin ; and now he says that, *when* he is *revealed*, Christ will destroy him with the brightness of his Coming. It follows from this, that no event intervenes between the Coming of the Lord in glory, and the fall of Antichrist. And if so, then the *Coming of Christ precedes the Millennium*.

Even Anti-millennarians admit this inference to be most natural and irresistible, if this "Brightness of His Coming" be his true, personal, real Coming the second time. But Mr. Brown tries to open a door of escape from this conclusion by asserting, that Paul has been "*drawn away*" from the subject with which he started to a "*new subject*;" in other words, that though Paul began with Christ's real *personal* Coming, he ends with speaking of a *spiritual* coming !* And to support this theory, he adds, that the prophets speak of Antichrist's

* Here, again, *Mr. Brown* has been anticipated in most of his arguments by *Dr. Urwick* in Lecture ii.

doom being inflicted by a spiritual Coming. Now, we deny this assertion as much as we doubt his theory. Mr. Brown ought to take Paul's clear, plain words as *settling what the prophets meant*, rather than try to settle Paul's meaning by adducing the far less perspicuous, because more figurative, language of the Old Testament prophets.

Few things can be more satisfactorily proved than that the "Coming" here is the real, personal Appearing of Christ.

There is everything in this term itself to lead us to suppose that such was the event intended. "*The outshining of his Coming*" is a remarkable expression, ("τῇ ἐπιφάνειᾳ * τῆς παρουσίας,") which seems to indicate that we are like persons looking upon a dark mass of cloud, expecting the lightning flash. There are arguments of another kind, however, quite decisive. Thus ; there is mention of Christ's Coming *in every chapter of both these epistles* ; and nowhere does it refer to any Coming but the Lord's Second Appearing, unless this is to be made a solitary exception. Again, *twelve references* to that event occur in the course of these two epistles ; and

* *Mr. B.* thinks it a "small and impotent" argument that is derived from the mere words here used. It might be so, if each word were not *inspired*. Paul uses ἐπιφάνεια in four other places, always in reference to the Second Personal Coming. (1 Tim. vi. 14 ; 2 Tim. iv. 1, and 8 ; Titus ii. 13.)

beyond doubt, eleven of these mean nothing else than the Second Coming. Is this *twelfth* to be this one solitary passage, where the sense is changed without one hint given that it is changed? Would this not be throwing dust in the eyes of the reader? Is this the manner of Paul—or rather, is this the manner of the Holy Spirit? Once more; the context decides the matter. For it is to this effect. It is meant to discuss *no other subject than the Second Coming of Christ*. It stands thus. I meet a man to whom I tell my expectation of immediately seeing the town to which I am travelling. He in reply says to me, “You must first cross that intervening hill.” Of course, then, I understand him to mean by his answer, neither more nor less than this, that *as soon as I have got to the other side of that hill which intervened*, I will be in sight of the town. So here. Paul tells them that they are not to suppose the day of Christ at hand, except The Falling away and the Man of Sin appear. Of course, then, *when these events have occurred*, that *day is at hand*. Had he even said, “*until* there be a falling away,” the words would have been far less clear than as they stand now, “*except* there be.” That “except” implies that the day shall be at hand, *if* the Man of Sin be revealed.

Thus, then, it appears that earth’s hope of deliverance from the Man of Sin is *the Coming of*

Christ. And if so, earth has *no Millennium till the Lord come*; for it groans under this oppressor till that day arrive.

The Lord will on that day exhibit himself as “the woman’s seed” bruising “the serpent.” It is to be noticed, that in this destruction of Antichrist, He is going on with the fulfilment of that first promise. For this system of iniquity is said to be Satan’s peculiar workmanship, just as Judas, “the son of perdition,” was. (Luke xxii. 3; John xiii. 2.)

“9. *Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan* (κατ’ ἐνεργειαν, the effect of Satan’s actively put forth skill) *with all power, and signs, and lying wonders,* 10. *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness* (all the deceit that unrighteousness can suggest) *in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.* 11. *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:* 12. *That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*”

It is not force of reason on the one side, and want of evidence on the other, that leads men to Popery. It is want of *love to the truth*; in other words, dislike of God’s holy fellowship. Hence, God gives them up, as he did Ahab, to the deceit of lying spirits (1 Kings xxii. 19—22); and when the Lord comes, He finds an army gathered against him, whom *Satan* has directly beguiled. None are

more truly under Satan's delusion than the followers of Popery,—none more directly beguiled, like Eve in Eden.

In what follows we have a beautiful statement of how it is that any soul in this fallen world can escape such snares of Satan. It is because of eternal election. It is a passage quite parallel to Rev. xiii. 8 ; “All that dwell on earth shall worship him, *whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world.*” The purpose of God was their security.

“13. *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* 14. *Whereunto he called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

And then, as if foreseeing that *Tradition* was to be one of the main props of the Man of Sin, even in his last days, Paul writes, verse 15, “*Therefore, brethren, stand fast, AND HOLD THE TRADITIONS WHICH YE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT, whether by word, or our epistle,*” more correctly, “Whether by word or epistle of ours.” The only traditions to be kept are those given by inspired apostles,—“*our word*” and “*our epistle,*” having defined the “*traditions*” to which he had referred them.

The whole passage closes with a prayer that reminds us of Rev. xiv. 12, uttered in a similar connexion; "Here is the *patience* of the saints," as if they would need much to uphold them in these days.

"16. *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace* (i. e., through the manifestation of his own free love to us, and not by human traditions, or other deceits of Antichrist), 17. *Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.*"

CHAPTER XVII.

AN ARGUMENT FOR THE PREMILLENNIAL COMING FROM REV. XIX.

THERE is not one passage in the Bible where our Lord's Second Coming is mentioned in connexion with a previous state of unclouded Millennial blessedness. But many are the passages where the flash of his Coming bursts out of a dark cloud that was overhanging earth.*

The scenes of this chapter seem to us to tell with irresistible force in favour of the Premillennial Coming. Here is a symbolic vision, wherein Christ is seen as a rider on a white horse, and the armies of heaven attending Him to the battle-field, each on his white horse, and each in his fine linen, white and clean. It is a glorious day ; living light from the throne shines on the armies and on their leader, as He goes forth to his final victory. The symbol represents Christ as a warrior, and hence the need of defining the person so fully, vers. 11—16. His warlike appearance might be supposed to conceal

* Wood's "Affirmative Answer," p. 55.

somewhat the form of the Son of man ; and there is need, therefore, to give materials for the answer to the question, " Who is this King of glory ?" " Who is this that cometh ?"

All admit that this scene has its place *before the Millennium*. There could be no difference of opinion as to this matter, for this scene ushers in chap. xx., where the thousand years are mentioned. Thus far, then, all are agreed. And also, all agree that in this chapter the main vision is the Lord Jesus himself amidst his attendant hosts.

But now the question arises, Is this vision meant to show Christ coming to overthrow his enemies in the way of providential judgments and the secret operations of his Spirit ; or is it meant to exhibit the Second Coming, the personal appearing of the Lord Jesus, " taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel ?"

We assert it is the latter that is meant ; for

1. The symbols do not suit a secret operation of providence, and judgments inflicted by an invisible hand. See e. g. ver. 20, the sentence passed upon the beast and false prophet when *taken alive*.

2. The symbols do suit Christ's Second Coming so exactly, that it is difficult to conceive any symbolic vision of it that would more fully and strikingly exhibit that event. His name too is now "*King of kings and Lord of lords*;" it used

to be "*The Word of God*" during the days when He was preached unto us.

3. The prophet Isaiah (chap. lxiii. 3—5) uses some of the terms here employed in reference, beyond all doubt, to the Lord's Second Coming.*

4. This is admitted to be the time of the *marriage supper of the Lamb*. See vers. 7—9. Surely, at such a time we look for the personal presence of the Bridegroom; and where is He if not in this description? Is not the *Marriage-Supper*-time the very same as Matt. xxv. 1—12? If so, the Bridegroom must be personally present, and seen by the company admitted, and by those too who are shut out.

5. If this be not Christ's personal Coming, seen in vision, then it follows, first, either that chap. xiv. 14 is his Second Coming; or, secondly, that there is not one single passage in all the Apocalyptic visions that describes that great event. But if it be admitted that chapter xiv. 14 is the Second Coming, then the *Premillennial doctrine* is admitted

* Mr. Gipps, "Treatise on the First Resurrection," page 6, says, that the description here cannot be the Lord's Second Coming, because He is here represented as riding on a white horse, whereas he is "*so to come as He was taken up*." But he quite forgets (what all admit) that this passage is a *symbolic vision*, and the question is, *What does the symbol mean?* He also forgets that the same Pillar which to the Egyptians wore the frown of darkness, was light to Israel.

also ; for that Coming is *at the destruction of Babylon*, not a thousand years after. And if it be denied that either passage is the Coming of the Lord Jesus the Second time, we would be left in this singular position, viz., that the *whole book of Revelation did not contain one view of the greatest event revealed in the Bible*.

6. Once more. *The Marriage Supper is Pre-millennial*, and it occurs in connexion with this Appearing of the Lord. That the *Marriage Supper precedes the thousand years* seems plain from verses 7, 8, 9, where it is said to *be come*, and yet chapter xx. 4 is yet *to follow*.

All these reasons justify the conclusion that this chapter sets forth the Second Coming of the Lord ; and it forms the introduction to the scenes of chap. xx. The Lord here comes in all his glory, and defeats his foes ; then we find Him raising his saints (xx. 4) and beginning his kingdom. David in person is on the battle-field.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PROOF THAT THE SECOND ADVENT IS PRE-MILLENNIAL. THE VISION OF THE FIRST RESURRECTION IN REVELATION XX.

THIS passage is the last one which we select. "It is (says Cox) to the Millennarian cause what 1 John v. 7 is to the Trinitarian cause. Both systems are well supported without these texts." And yet these texts must not be yielded.

If this passage describe a real resurrection of persons, then it is admitted by almost all that the Lord Jesus must be personally here, since He is the author of the resurrection. And as all this takes place at the *commencement* of the Millennium, the consequence would follow irresistibly that the Lord Jesus comes to raise his saints in glory previous to the thousand years.

It is interesting to notice how men of most opposite sentiments on other points have thought this passage to be in favour of a literal resurrection.

We find *Toplady** stating his opinion thus — “The stupendous accomplishment of this predestined Restoration is largely and explicitly foretold Rev. xx., where we read, that the apostate angels shall be restrained by the coercive power of God, and confined to their own place for a thousand years. That those of mankind who belong to Christ, and especially such of them as have been, or are yet to be slain for his name’s sake, shall reign with him upon earth during that given period. And that the bodies of the reprobate dead shall not be raised until that period is fully expired.” In like manner, *Moses Stuart*,† who has done his utmost to explain away the other visions of the Apocalypse, is brought to a stand here, and writes thus: “Putting now all these considerations together, I do not see how we can, on the ground of exegesis, fairly avoid the conclusion that John has taught in the passage before us that there will be a resurrection of the martyr-saints at the commencement of the period after Satan shall have been shut up in the dungeon of

* In his “Meditation for New Year’s Day.” In a short essay on Original Sin, he remarks, “The doctrine of Original Sin is the basis of the Millennium. The earth, which is disordered and put out of course through the offence of man, will be restored to its primitive beauty, purity, and regularity, when Jesus shall descend to reign in person with his saints (2 Peter iii. 13).”

† “Comment. on the Apocalypse,” vol. ii. p. 476.

the great abyss *Doubtful*, however, philologically considered, I think we *cannot well name it*. I have already given reasons why we seem to be constrained to admit the sense of a *bodily resurrection* like to the last and final one. The exigencies of the passage are apparently such as absolutely to demand this ; at least a great portion of recent commentators have judged them to be such. *Indeed, if this be not a position in the interpretation of Scripture which is fully and fairly made out by philology, I should confess myself at a loss to designate one which is, from among the many difficult passages of the Scriptures.*" *

All agree that it is written in symbol, and is part of a symbolic revelation or vision. Now, the previous chapter had so far led us on in the vision ; it had shewn us the arrival of the great conqueror on the battle-field, as "King of kings and Lord of lords," and had shewn us his victory. While he still stands on that battle-field, amid His glorious attendant company, he fetches out Satan from the camp of his foes. An angel, who had been despatched for this special service, appears in sight of all, coming down from heaven with a great chain and with the key of the pit. In presence of the King and conqueror, "*the Woman's Seed,*" the old

* See, also, the views of Olshausen, in his "Biblical Commentary," Introd., pp. cvii. cviii.

Serpent is seized, bound, and cast into prison for a thousand years. Satan and his hosts are now in the abyss. (Luke viii. 31.)

Ver. 1. "*And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand.* Ver. 2. *And he laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,* Ver. 3. *And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*"

We are led back to Eden by this vision. Here is *the serpent* cast out, and his deceptions discovered and brought to an end; another instalment of the fulfilment of the prediction, "*He shall bruise thy head.*" Earth is thus free of its great deceiver. John does not expatiate on what followed upon this, but only supplements what the ancient prophets had foretold of the time of blessedness to earth. *They* had foretold the day of blessedness and deliverance from corruption when the Spirit is poured out from on high; *John* supplements this, telling us that then there shall be no Satanic influence to arrest the working of the Holy Spirit among men. "O happy time, when lions lie in chains, and the dragon's dwelling is in the deep!"

Mr. Brown, however,* is alarmed at this truth. His theology on this point is very dangerous. 1. He is "*suspicious*" of anything being Scriptural that is taught there *only once*. This is surely perilous ground to occupy, especially in regard to *facts*. 2. He maintains that *Satan and sin* are so bound up together in the unregenerate man, that there is never sin committed by a sinner, without Satan's co-operation. † But though he maintains this, not one of the quotations prove it. It is a view that would go far to modify our ideas of the depth of human corruption. And this Apocalyptic passage may be expressly designed to teach, by the case of the unsaved during the absence of Satan for a thousand years, that *the heart of man*, apart from all evil influence on the side of hell, is of itself so desperately wicked that it will be found able to resist the brightest manifestations of God. 3. He can arrive at his conclusion only by maintaining that *to bind Satan and cast him into the pit* ‡ is the same as to render his efforts nugatory ; and

* Pages 298—313.

† Is not this more scriptural—"The original pravity of our nature is a fertile womb that has millions of sins in it, and would be eternally bringing forth, though there were no devil to tempt." (Carmichael on Mortification of Sin.)

‡ If here "*cast him into the pit*" do *not* mean his personal removal from the earth, then how can it be shewn that ver. 10, "*cast into the lake*," means any change of locality ?

that the *Church* (not Christ) lays hold on the dragon in chap. xix. 20 as well as here ! A neologian would rejoice in being allowed thus to dilute the positive into mere negation. It is as if one said that Samson's being bound in the prison of Gaza meant no more than that he could not make any impression on the Philistine hosts any longer, but not at all that he ceased to go up and down their land, seeking, if he could, to annoy them. Is there any interpreter that holds this view along with Mr. B., excepting Mr. Gipps, who had the precedence in maintaining that Satan is only bound from "*deceiving*,"—that is, according to him, from spreading some special form of deceit, which is at length to gather Gog and Magog together.

But we proceed. The vision having shewn us Satan and his hosts led captive, and thus earth relieved of its deadliest foe, and left to the influence of "the stronger than the strong man" (Luke xi. 21, 22), now shews us in symbol the honour and blessedness of all former saints.

Ver. 4. "*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them : and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands ; and they lived and reigned with Christ a*

thousand years. Ver. 5. *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.* THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION. Ver. 6. *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

It is not needful to occupy time in proving that the expression, "*the souls* of those who were beheaded," has nothing in it whatever in favour of a spiritual resurrection. No reasonable critic now will ever draw an argument from that expression, as if it countenanced the idea that "not persons, but *principles*," were intended. The use of the phrase in chap. vi. 9 decides the matter, as meaning that the persons slain, who were seen in a vision lying at the foot of the altar where this poured-out blood, or life, used to be seen, did now arise and live.* Such was *the vision*, whatever its *symbolical sense* may be.

* It is of no importance in settling the literality of the symbolic sense, but it is in itself curious, to note here two uses of *ψυχαί*. It is used for *persons* thus (Num. xxxi. 35)—*ψυχαί ἀνθρώπων δύο καὶ τριακοντα χιλιάδες*; (1 Chron. v. 21)—*ψυχαί ἀνδρῶν ἑκατον χιλιάδες*. Then, it is used in the singular often for *dead bodies*—the Hebrew *נֶפֶשׁ* being, when so used, equivalent to "a thing deserted by the breath—*anima efflata*." Thus Lev. xxi. 11, *ἐπὶ ψυχῇ τετελετηκυῖα*; Haggai ii. 13, *ἀκαθάρτος ψυχῇ*. Once in the plural, Levit.

It is more needful, however, to ascertain the sense of "*they sat upon them*," and "*judgment was given to them*." Who was it that sat? This is explained by observing that this is a Hebraistic form of speech equivalent to "I saw thrones and *persons sitting on them*." The nominative is often thus omitted just in order to put the statement in an indefinite form. See Luke xvi. 9, "that *they* may receive you;" Isaiah xi. 9, "*they* shall not hurt;" Prov. vi. 30, "*they* do not despise a thief;" Job xix. 26, "though after my skin, *they* destroy my body, yet in my flesh I shall see God." Next; "*judgment was given to them*," seems to send us back to Dan. vii. 10, where "*the judgment was set*" is equivalent to "the judge took his seat." So here; John saw thrones, filled by a company of kings; and then he saw that company receive authority to act as judges, as if to remind us of 1 Cor. vi. 2, "the saints shall judge the world." The "*thrones*" refer us to Matt. xix. 28, where our Lord promised to his true followers, in the person of the twelve, that they should sit on "*thrones in the regeneration*," at the time of the renovation of all things,—as he again did Luke xxii. 30.

xxi. 1, "*ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς*." Now, as the Apocalypse has many references to the altar and its rites, and as chap. vi. 9 is a scene at the altar, might not the words strictly bear the rendering, "I saw *the dead bodies* under the altar?"

Once more ; the vision shewed this company sitting on thrones *with Christ in the midst*. "They reigned *with Christ*." As Matt. xix. 28 said, "When the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit on twelve thrones." Each one is "*blessed*," full of joy ; each one is "*holy*," being now "like Christ, seeing Him as He is."

But still we must enter more fully into the inquiry, Of what is all this a symbol ? It is not a history—it is not like Matthew xxiv. ; it is admitted to be a vision.

We believe it symbolizes *a true and literal resurrection of the saints*, who shall then reign with Christ for a thousand years. Everything in the vision points to this. Let us only once again remember what the apostle saw. He saw every foe defeated ; he saw Satan and his hosts cast into prison. Then, he saw a company of kings, with Christ in the midst, exercising royal judgment. Among those who sat on the thrones and reigned, he saw *all the persons mentioned previously in this book as following the Lamb*. On these, indeed, his attention was peculiarly fixed. While he saw a great company of kings, he specially notices (that we may see the reward of those who keep "the sayings of this book") those who stood faithful unto death, and those who kept themselves free from every appearance

of conformity to the beast. It was *their* history that this book was tracing ; as a specimen of the lot of all believers. And these he saw, raised again to reign with Christ.

Some have maintained that this vision receives its fulfilment in the case of every believer who overcomes the world. This victory over the present world, they say, is receiving the reward here foretold. Others have thought the whole fulfilled when *Constantine* raised the Church to political power, and arrayed all the power of the Roman empire on its side. But the generality of those who will not admit it to mean a literal resurrection say, that it foretells a period still future when the truth as it is in Jesus shall be exalted in the earth, and be prevalent in all kingdoms, and have supremacy over all other principles.

Now, in opposition to all these views, we maintain *a reign of persons*, not of principles, and *a real, bodily resurrection of the saints*, for the following reasons.*

* In John v. 25, 29, our Lord does not state that the *resurrection of damnation* is cotemporaneous with the *resurrection of life*. His object there is to assert himself to be author of both, whensoever they may occur. In 1 Cor. xv. 23, the Apostle asserts the resurrection; Christ first, *then* (επειτα) those who are His, at His Coming. “ *Then* (εἰτα) comes the end.” What is this latter clause? Why does Paul introduce it? In order to shew that even after the

First. *It is the most natural sense.* As it was said in xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord," so it looks to us very natural to understand ver. 6 of the same persons in another state, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." And as it was so often said to us in the epistles, "If we suffer with Him, we shall also *reign with Him*" (2 Tim. ii. 12 ; Romans viii. 17 ; 1 Peter iv. 13), it is most natural to think that here is the realization of the promised glory, "*They reigned with Christ.*" Our Master's own words also, seem here to find their most natural fulfilment, "Ye shall sit on thrones." (Luke xxii. 30.)

Secondly. The connexion in which it occurs leads us to think of *persons*, not of principles. What preceded was the history of a real slaughter of men—the sweeping away of the wicked, kings and people. We, therefore, naturally still look for something regarding *persons*. Surely, also, what follows appears to be the resurrection of real persons, "*the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished.*" It has, indeed, been attempted to evade this conclusion by saying, that "*the dead*" in ver. 5 are not the same as in ver. 12, but so different, that the "*dead*" who live not

saints are raised at His Coming, there is yet to be another stroke on *death*, viz., at the end, when Rev. xx. 14 is fulfilled.

"*till the thousand years end*" of ver. 5, are symbolical of *principles not rising again till then*. Now this view requires the assumption that "*till*" implies that no sooner were the thousand years done, than "*the rest of the dead*" arose, before Satan was again let loose! If so, then we admit there might be another company of "dead," different from ver. 12. But there is not a shadow of a proof for this assumption. To say that "*till*" implies that there was no interval, is to say that Luke xxiv. 49, "Tarry ye in Jerusalem *till* ye be endued with power from on high," proves that the apostles were scattered everywhere preaching the Word, long before the persecution of Stephen, nay, before the very day of Pentecost itself, if "*until*" is to be pressed to this use. But any one who knows language, knows that "*till*" has not *necessarily* this sense, but only marks that NOT BEFORE such a time, the event is to be.

Thirdly, But even did we admit that ver. 5 spoke of a different class from ver. 12, we would still go on to argue, that the literality of the resurrection in this vision was countenanced by the literality of the resurrection in ver. 12—the vision of the great white throne. All admit that that vision exhibits a *throne* and a *company round it*, who are literally raised from the dead. If so in that case, why are not *thrones* and the *raising up of the dead*

in this other case to be understood as equally descriptive of a resurrection of *persons*? You must either maintain *both* to be literal, or neither.

In confirmation of this, Mr. Birks (Lect. on Daniel) has noticed that the term "the *first* resurrection" is clearly indicative of there being a *second*, corresponding to it in kind, though subsequent in order of time; just as the *first* Punic war implies that there was a *second* of the like nature. This remark, indeed, is not decisive, but it has force.

Fourthly, The apostle himself explains his vision, "*This is the first resurrection.*" Here is a note inserted by the seer's own hand. It is like some of John Bunyan's marginal notes to his "Holy War," as when he tells us of "*The slings and battering-rams*" brought to bear on Mansoul, he inserts in the margin, "The sentence and power of the word." This is the custom of the apocalyptic prophet; after a vision he frequently inserts a note of explanation, and the note is always plain and *unfigurative*. Thus, Rev. i. 20, "The seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven Churches." In chap. v. 8, "Golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." In chap. xvii. 15, "The waters . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." And ver. 18, "The woman which thou sawest is that

great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." And in this very passage, "That old serpent, which is the devil."

John, then, meant to give us the key to the symbol. "This," said he, "this that you behold is the first resurrection." Our Lord had spoken of "the resurrection of the just."* (Luke xiv. 14.) He spoke of "raising them up at the last day" (John vi. 39, 54), as a peculiar reward. He mentioned those who should be counted worthy to obtain that world (*αἰών*), and "the resurrection from the dead" (Luke xx. 35, very emphatic, "*τῆς ἀναστάσεως τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν*"). And Paul, with his eye on that saying of his Lord, had written to the Churches concerning "attaining to the resurrection of the dead" (Philip. iii. 11), "*εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν*." With this, and more than this, in view, already held out to the Church, John is here led by the Spirit to explain the vision—to write, if I may so speak, at the foot of the picture he has painted, "*This is the first resurrection.*"

* Mr. Brown, pp. 332, 333, quite misleads his readers as to a point of criticism. He says truly, that "*from the dead*," is an exact rendering of the words in Philip. iii. 11. But he omits to state that "*resurrection*" there is spoken of by a peculiar term, "*ἐξανάστασις*," a select number rising "*from the dead*," being probably implied. And in Luke xx. 35, the words are "THE resurrection from the dead," expressed by a double article.

And this is not all. For, after having explained the vision by this historic statement, he exclaims, "*Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection; they shall reign with Him a thousand years.*" Suppose for a moment that ver. 4 described the *triumph of spiritual principles*; yet is there not here a statement that all those of ver. 4 shall "*reign with Christ*;" all who have risen in that resurrection shall be rewarded by sitting on a throne beside Him for a thousand years? The *reign* of a thousand years is the reward enjoyed by those who *rise during* that thousand years. Even if "*This is the first resurrection,*" meant "*This is conversion—this is the new birth, exhibited on a large scale,*" still, it is written, that those who have part in that new birth "*shall reign a thousand years.*"

One of the most plausible ways of evading these conclusions, is that of those who try to shut us up to the necessity of admitting that *only the martyrs* are here raised. And when they think they have shewn that *only the martyrs* are here spoken of, they infer from that that it is a *triumph* of the *martyrs' principles* that is meant.

But there is nothing to prove that *martyrs only* are raised; for, "*I saw thrones, and persons occupying them,*" may include every class of saints. Next, "*I saw the souls of those that were be-*

headed," singles out a special class who were present among the multitude; but in no way limits the crowned ones to that class. Nay, the next clause, properly rendered, introduces along with these, another class. It is; "I saw and *those who* (*ôctives*) had not worshipped the beast."* These two classes are specially noticed (as we already saw), for reasons connected with the visions of this book; but this special mention of these in no way contradicts the conclusion that besides them there were the innumerable saints of past ages.† It had already been declared in chap. xi. 18, that "prophets," and "small and great," and "those that feared his name," were in one body to be raised and rewarded. And the song had been heard, chap. v. 10, sung by all saints in heaven, patriarchs and prophets among them, "*We shall reign on the earth.*"

Fifthly, We notice, once more, that there is great appropriateness in John's explanation, "*This is the*

* Thus Whitby, though a spiritualizer, distinguishes the two clauses; and this is the force of "*ôctives.*" It is not a pronoun whose antecedent is the *souls under the altar*, but it has its antecedent implied, "*the persons, whosoever they were, who had not worshipped.*" Augustine, *De Civit. Dei*, renders it, "*Et si qui non adoraverint.*"

† Elliott quotes Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Victorinus, Lactantius, as all holding that *the saints generally*, not the martyrs only, arise.

first resurrection," when we consider what had previously been the state of revelation on the subject of the resurrection. Mr. Birks remarks that though the fact had been often mentioned, *the time* and *the order* of it, had not yet been fully revealed. And, whereas there would be a tendency in our minds to suppose a simultaneous resurrection of all, we are guarded against this by the note of explanation, which calls attention to the *time*, the *order*, and the *persons*. And while our eye rests on their glorious reward, the prophet cries in our ear, "*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in that first resurrection!*" in order to stir up our soul, and by a holy violence compel us to come in. This is that "*better resurrection*" (Heb. xi. 35), that resurrection which brings better blessings than life could ever furnish, in hope of which martyrs were tortured unto death.

Some would thus far agree with us, but they are staggered by what follows. They think that what follows tells of sadness in the bowers of Millennial blessedness, the slime of the serpent again passing over the hills and valleys of our delivered earth. But they overlook the fact that Satan makes only one convulsive effort to regain earth, and this being immediately defeated, and the foe cast into the fire, the blessed feel more secure in their bliss than ever.

7. "*And when the thousand years are expired,*

Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the Beloved City: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. 11. And I saw a Great White Throne."

There is the same difficulty in understanding the first chapter of Job as there is in this passage. How could Satan enter among the "sons of God?" How can he come near the spot where the Lord and his saints are seen? There is the same (but no greater) difficulty in the one case as in the other. Only that Satan should thus dare to assail by power the Son of man in his glory, even as he assailed Him in his humiliation by snares and sufferings shews us the unfathomable malignity and desperate daring of our awful foe.

But how does he get so numerous an army so quickly after the Millennial days? This is a question equally puzzling to Millennarian and Antimillennarian. We do not enter upon it. But we may notice another, "*Who are these whom he gathers?*"

They are certainly *none of the glorified*. And as certainly they are none of *the truly converted ones* still in the flesh. We do not know much of what shall be the condition of the Church during these Millennial days in regard to hypocrites and nominal saints ; but it is likely, from the parable of "the tares," and the parable of "the fishes," and other similar passages, that the Church shall have no such in its pale.* But there shall be some ungodly existing all along, during these thousand years ; and these, it is likely, will retire from the presence of the Lord *as Cain did*,—the ends of the earth may be their retreat ; and while the "knowledge of the Lord covers the earth as the waters do the sea," there shall be a casting out of the scum and filth on the shores of this sea, viz., *the four CORNERS (γῶνιαι) of the earth*. There will Satan find his materials for an army when he is let loose ; and his hosts form an array more numerous than the sand of the sea.

There will be much more light cast on this subject during the thousand years. Meanwhile, all matter so distant from us is like a planet scarcely visible to us ; we must wait till the telescope of coming generations brings it nearer.

It is well, however, to observe, that this assault

* "The world shall be the houseless, homeless pilgrim, and the Church the possessors of the earth."

of the dregs of earth's wickedness, led on by Satan's innumerable hosts, is ended very soon. There is no long conflict, no slaying of witnesses, no days like those of Noah, no days like those of Lot, no tribulation like Jerusalem's. These foes come up out of their ambuscades, and display their banners suddenly on the breadth of the earth, especially marching toward "the Beloved City" with infatuated daring. But in one moment, as in the case of Nadab and Abihu, Immanuel points his Father to these advancing hosts, acting still as Mediator as well as King, and fire from God destroys them! And *the devil* is carried by that fire to the lake of fire and brimstone for ever.

No sooner is this done, than the *Great White Throne* is set. And now it is that all of every age, all of every generation, small and great, stand before God. The raised saints will be there as assessors; the "rest of the dead" are there, all that are in their graves come forth. "The books are opened."

The left-hand company are judged. "*Death and hell*" (i. e., *hades*) are "cast into the lake of fire;" that is, the wicked dead being raised and judged, there is no longer any trace left of *dying*, and of the *invisible state* where the soul lives apart from the body, except in the lake of fire, where the eternal sting of death remains.

Meanwhile, the blessed saints are witnesses of

the glory of the Lord in all these scenes. Their reign of a thousand years was only the beginning—the first scene—of their glorious eternity. It was only *the porch* by which they entered “the ages to come.” They go on for ever from strength to strength, revelling in discoveries of the name of God, led by the Lamb for ever in the green pastures, and to living fountains of water. Who can imagine how deep will be their holiness, as thus they grow up to the fulness of the stature of Christ—into Him who is the Head? And that awful scene of the *Great White Throne*, occurring after a thousand years’ experience of God’s holy love, will give intense zest to that love and grace. Their souls will be moved at the displays of God and of man that day in a way we cannot conceive, as well as by what they lately saw of the tremendous malignity of Satan. Such scenes as these will be their early discipline in the glorious kingdom; lessons for eternity to come, enlarging their souls and revealing God in all his unfathomable plans.

CHAPTER XIX.

REMARKS UPON THE KINGDOM.

HAVING now exhibited some of the Scripture proofs in favour of the Premillennial Coming, we are brought to the subject of *the Kingdom itself*. The Lord Jesus shall himself come to establish that kingdom, taking out of the way whatsoever hinders.

But it is not our purpose to enter upon this field. We purposely refrain from details ; because so many who inquire into prophecy are kept wavering as to the question of the Premillennial Coming, by mixing up the inquiry, “ *When is it that He comes?*” with the totally distinct inquiry, “ *What does He do at his Coming ?*”

It is one thing to ask, “ *When* does this kingdom appear ?” and quite another, and more abstruse question, “ *What is* that kingdom to be ?” We agree with an old writer who says, that this doctrine concerning Christ’s Coming before the thousand years is so plain, that every objection may be answered, “ *Si de re non de modo loquimur,*”

—if we keep to the *fact*, instead of prying into the *manner*.

Only thus far we think it right to state our views regarding that kingdom, namely, so far as any might be prejudiced against a candid study of the proofs in favour of the Premillennial Coming, by a lurking idea that it landed them in something unspiritual, and had in it more of earth than heaven.

We expect the Lord Jesus at his Coming will raise the whole * company of his sleeping saints, and give them their glorious bodies, while He fills them with all "*the grace that was to be brought them*" at his appearing. (1 Pet. i. 13.) We expect Him to destroy at that same time all who have had the Gospel sent to them, and yet rejected it, according to 2 Thess. i. 8. His lightnings will flash their flaming fire on every sinner who rejected an offered Saviour. On every such soul, in that hour, "THE DOOR SHALL BE SHUT."

But we expect that at that same time "when the earth is devoured with the fire of his jealousy" (Zeph. iii. 8), and when, in all probability, the

* We should notice here Heb. xi. 39, 40. *The promise and The Better Thing*, is this glory. The patriarchs and elders get it not till their brethren join them. Not "they without us," but we and they together,—the whole family who passed through tribulation.

ten kingdoms are consumed with fire—a fire whose power is felt through the bowels of the whole earth—that at that time He will turn toward *Israel*, and “from beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, his suppliants, the daughter of His dispersed, shall bring this offering.” (Zeph. iii. 10.) And then, too, He takes the veil off all nations, and “the kingdoms of the world,” all heathen lands, become the Lord’s kingdom. (Isaiah xxv. 7, Rev. xi. 15.)

Amid all this, the saints whom the Lord raised at his Coming, reign in glory over the earth, ruling it, and presiding over it—whether always visibly we cannot tell—the prince of evil and his angels being dethroned. All creation has its share in deliverance from the bondage of corruption, relieved from the curse of the fall, at the time of this “manifestation of the Sons of God.” (Rom. viii. 19—21.) The government of earth is now in holy hands.

If asked, but *how* are the saints to reign? What are to be their employments? Where are they to be serving? In what way are they to rule? We cannot tell. If asked, How Christ Himself is to manifest his Person, and a hundred such other questions, we still say, We cannot tell. It is not on these things that it is necessary for us to have light. Christ may shine forth over earth from some glorious throne, as the sun looks forth on our world, and fills it with light and beauty; though how he

will do it, we do not know. But the FACT of His Coming to reign is the great point on which we fix our eye.

We wish the following remarks to be attended to in regard to the kingdom. 1. It is one thing to expect a kingdom of Christ upon earth, and quite another thing to expect an earthly or a carnal kingdom.* We expect only the former. His kingdom is not "OF this world ;" but surely it is to be "IN this world." We look for a kingdom of Christ on earth, all spiritual, "all righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." 2. Jewish expectations of that kingdom may have been carnal ; and so may have been the expectations of some of the early and later Millennarians. But a scriptural Premillennialist's hopes have no such element of carnality. To believe that earth will be the locality and the theatre, implies nothing unspiritual. It would be Gnosticism to suppose that earth and matter are themselves corrupt. Adam and Eve were as spiritual before the fall while keeping and dressing the trees of Eden, as now that their souls are in heaven. 3. We hold that *the kingdom* then is to

* Hence the Author of "A Sober Inquiry; or Christ's Reign with His Saints," printed 1660, and lately edited by Mr. Bickersteth, says, "This kingdom is to come upon earth, yet it shall not be an earthly or a worldly kingdom, as the Chiliasts and some Jews vainly dreamed, but a *gloriously spiritual and holy kingdom.*" (Page 36.)

be, as to its essential qualities, just a *visible manifestation of the principles of God's redeeming grace*. His kingdom *κατ' ἐξοχην*, has not yet appeared. (2 Tim. iv. 1.) Virtually these principles form a kingdom at this moment *in every converted soul*. But on that day, these principles will be seen forming a glorious kingdom visible to every eye under the King and God of all grace. The halo of outward glory will be God's token of approval of these holy principles. It is an error into which some Premillennialists have fallen, to deny that Jesus is in any sense already reigning even on David's throne. For, *the throne of David* is already given *Him*; the right and the rule is His; He is a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. And yet more; he is the only true heir "of the house and lineage of David." But it is true, notwithstanding, that He has not *actually as yet exercised the rule over David's kingdom*. He is yet to exercise his kingly power over Israel in some peculiar way. At present, however, He is like David while king at Hebron for seven and a half years, claiming to be, and, *de jure*, real king of Jerusalem, too. Still, until he actually went to Jerusalem, and swayed the sceptre over it, it was true that *the kingdom* in its full sense was not come. But we fully agree that both now, and then also, "*the principedom of Messiah is strictly a SAVING DIGNITY*." (Mr. Brown, p. 158.)

He manifests the love of Godhead, and all the perfections of Godhead, for ever, in this kingdom of the redeemed.

4. It is using a two-edged weapon to tell us, that such a kingdom as we speak of, with Christ in the midst, would quite destroy the use of the Bible. Premillennialists* might safely leave all questions as to miracles restored and new revelations, for the day to declare. Only this we plainly see, that we shall be able to delight in, and to be taught by the Word of God in those days as much as now. For, we ask, does *Christ's First Coming* annihilate the use of Isaiah liii., just because it fulfils it? Who will tell us so? And shall His Second Coming make *God's mind* in passages that bade us "watch," less impressive than before we saw the event for which we were to watch? Our *mode* of getting instruction will be different; but that is all. If learning to know *God's thoughts to usward* be the great lesson sought for by us in the Word, then we shall no more lose this after the Lord's Coming than now we lose the benefit of Old Testament history and Old Testament expectations. To turn *prophecy into history*—to turn the prophecy of Christ's

* *Affirmative Answer*, pages 30, 31. But surely Mr. Brown errs in saying that miracles are for an *infantile* state of the Church. Was the Church not in greater maturity as to *growth and fruit* in Apostolic days than it has ever been since?

glorious Appearing into a history of it—may be in these days as impressive as reading Isaiah liii. is to us, comparing it with the event.

5th. It will be in order to keep up a manifestation of *sovereignty*, at a time when the elect form the mass of the earth, that *the Jews* shall continue to be specially favoured.

6th. It is not an unprecedented state of things that part of the Church should be glorified, while another part is not so. Already we have knowledge of *our Head* being glorified, and a few of his members, such as Elias, Enoch, and those that arose with Him at the resurrection. Man would fain have everything systematic and uniform ; but the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

Meanwhile, our joy in the hope of that kingdom is not its external glory, nor yet its rest and refreshment, but its “*King in His beauty*.” All the glories of His kingdom will be only so many channels for conveying manifestations of *Himself* to His redeemed.* *Godhead* for evermore discovered to us

* Is this implied in Paul's desire Philipp. iii. 10 ? There is a chain of truth. He longs “*to know Him* ;” and, in order to this, he seeks to know what comes from him, viz., *regenerating power*, such as was put forth in his resurrection ; then, *justification*, fellowship in—reckoned one with him in—his sufferings : next, *sanctification*, assimilated to his death, as dead as he to earth ; and *lastly, glorification*, attaining the resurrection from among the dead.

by means of *God in our nature*—this is the chiefest joy. It is in this view that we cherish the hope of the kingdom. Solomon's riches shall be known then—but specially the largeness of Solomon's heart.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be *like Him*; seeing Him as He is. And every man that hath *this hope in Him* purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” (1 John iii. 2, 3.)

CHAPTER XX.

THE FACE OF THE SKY. THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

WE would now briefly state what seems to be the position which we in this generation occupy in prospect of the Coming of the Son of man. But we refer to "*Bickersteth's Divine Warning*" for a rousing statement on this subject.

There are the following signs of the time being very near :—

1. Daniel xii. 4 furnishes a sign. The words were to be shut up and sealed "*till the time of the end.*" They are now unsealed. Prophecy is now much studied. There never was such a day as ours in this respect. Surely we are at "the time of the end," Dr. Cappadose truly observes, "It is an incontrovertible fact, that it is only within the last fifty years that the knowledge of the *Eschatology*, or the doctrine of the last things, has made any remarkable progress." *

* In his speech in the General Assembly of the Free

2. But Daniel xii. 4 furnishes another sign. "*Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*" What a remarkable feature is this of our day ! If you take it in regard to the Church, how true it is. Missionary operations abroad, and books upon books published at home ! Bible Societies, tracts, Sabbath-schools, all kinds of education. Surely this is "*running to and fro*" and "*knowledge increasing !*" Or, suppose it spoken in regard to the world. What a change since even our fathers' days. Railways and steam-vessels have made "*a running to and fro*" unprecedented in other ages ; commerce visits every sister land, and scientific and literary "*knowledge*" abounds. All this speaks to us of our being "*at the time of the end.*"

3. Rev. xvi. 12 furnishes another.† The drying of the Euphrates—the dwindling away of that Mahometan empire which in chap. ix. 14 was traced

Church of Scotland, May, 1846, wherein he suggested that "a complete recognition of the royal rights of the Lord Jesus," should include "*His reign on earth ;*" and our Church confession might yet contain in it, "The restoration of Israel to the land of their inheritance, and the Personal Reign of King Jesus in glory before the day of judgment."

† Bickersteth's "Divine Warning" should be consulted in regard to the signs of the times; also "*Prophetic Landmarks.*" (Pp. 363—399.)

to the Euphrates in its beginnings. Every one knows how the Turkish empire is a mere shadow, and not a year passes wherein we do not hear of something that tells of its increasing debility. Now, under the vial that produces this exhaustion, the cry goes forth (ver. 15), "*Behold, I come as a thief!*" Is there not something startling here? As if the Lord saw the sleep of the Church?

4. But Rev. xvi. 13, 14, furnishes another sign. The "*three unclean spirits, like frogs,*" are croaking over earth. *Popery*, *Infidelity*, and *Despotism* have each their activities. Each has energy in it, as if they would divide the world, or at least the ten kingdoms, among them. *Russia's* despotic principles, *France's* Infidelity, and the *Popery* of many countries gaining enormous strength, may alarm us. They will soon gather the nations under their respective banners.

Now, let us remember that here occurs the cry, "*Behold! I come as a thief! Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*"

5. Isaiah lxii. 10, 11, where the Coming of the Lord is spoken of as proclaimed to Israel, and Psalm cii. 13, 14, furnish another sign. There is great interest excited in behalf of the Jews, and in behalf of their land. Never since the apostolic

days was there anything like the present care for Israel. Now this stands connected with "*The Lord appearing in glory*" (ver. 16); and Isa. lxii. 12, with Zion being "sought out." Israel's return and conversion stand in connexion with "*the resurrection*," in Dan. xii. 1, 2. And Luke xxi. 24—27, shews that their deliverance is the time of the Son of man's Appearing in the clouds.

In connexion with Israel, a sign exists in the growth and maturity of a great northern power, —Russia,—corresponding to Ezek. xxxviii. 1—10, in many most striking particulars.

6. Rev. xiv. 6, 7, 8, is another. The Gospel very widely preached among the nations is a sign of Babylon's ruin being near; and Babylon falls by "the brightness of his Coming." Just as "the Gospel preached for a witness" to all the Roman world was a sign of Jerusalem's destruction being near, so now, the Gospel preached by missionaries, and by Bibles sent to so many nations, is a sign of the Lord at hand. And nowhere is it plainer than in our land, where, besides the word preached, the Bible lies on the shelf of almost every house, a silent but solemn witness against the despisers of the Gospel.

7. Is not Matt. xxv. 5, 6, another? "*While the Bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and*

slept”—only awaking at midnight by the cry, “Behold, He cometh.” Just as before Jerusalem’s day of ruin, “*the love of many waxed cold,*” so in the Church now before the Bridegroom comes. It is a sign—too visible to be overlooked.

8. Perhaps James v. 3 intimates that professors of the truth should be found eagerly bent on the accumulation of wealth in the last day. Is not this too obviously true in our Churches? But at all events, 2 Tim. iii. 5, “*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,*” is characteristic of “the last perilous times.” And truly it characterizes ours. Forms of religion—Puseyism and Popery in the van—profession of religion instead of true faith—Church-membership substituted for union to a living Saviour—a political, or semi-political air breathed by whole congregations under the disguise of zeal against abuses—all these things are evident among ourselves in every city and town and county. Abroad it is equally true—in Prussia, Holland, Germany, America—form and profession, without Christ-like self-denial, and without living faith. We are in the “*last and perilous times.*”

9. We might from the same passage adduce, “*Boasters, proud, blasphemers,*” as found among professing Christians. And the Neologian spirit

of Germany is a notable proof of it—a spirit which, one has said, is in everything like that of the giants before the Flood, excepting that it substitutes spiritual for physical force.

10. If Luke xxi. 34 be a sign, we have it among us; “*surfeiting*” luxury among the rich, “*drunkenness*” among the poor, “THE CARES OF THIS LIFE” over the whole mass of the busy, bustling, restless community. At such a time “the day comes un-awares!” Amid earth’s pride and luxury, the sign of the Son of man shall appear. When they scarcely think the sun at its meridian (says one), “suddenly shall the sun disappear, and with a clap that shall shake heaven, earth, and hell, THE DOOR SHALL BE SHUT.”

11. If 2 Peter iii. 4 be a sign, we have it. Scoffers ask, “*Where is the promise of his Coming?*” Infidelity is bold among us. So Jude 18, “*Mockers* in the last time.”

Jude 10, 16, describes men of the last days, whom the Lord comes to convince and destroy. And such we have. He speaks of men, like our Socialists, and the mass of our immoral community, “*What they know naturally as brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves.*” We have Chartists of all degrees who “*despise* dominion, speak evil of dignities, and of things which they

know not." We have discontent and change breathed forth in almost every newspaper,—"*Murmurers, complainers.*"

12. Luke xxi. 25 is another remarkable sign,—"*Distress of nations, with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things that are coming on the earth.*"* Politicians are our witnesses here. We might point also to the unsolved problem of Ireland's evils, and to the undiscovered origin of the awful *cholera*, and the recent *famine*, as instances of "*distress with perplexity.*"

13. The denial of *Christ's power* as King is a sign—whether this be denied openly, or by tame neutrality. It is denied by states and kingdoms who will give no direct countenance to the truth. It is denied by Churches who allow Christ's laws to be overborne by man's statutes—discipline to be trampled on by human ordinances. Both Psalm ii. 1, 2, and Rev. xix. 16, which puts the name "*King of kings and Lord of lords*" last in his titles, indicate the state of things just before his Coming to be one wherein He should be denied as King.

14. The efforts of the ungodly, and even of professing Christian men, to abolish the *Sabbath*,

* "Non tumultus, non quies, quale magni metus et magnæ iræ silentium est." (Tac. Hist. i. 14.)

seem ominous. It is as if by robbing God and God's people of that time of rest and refreshment, and *that type of the Sabbath that remains for the earth*, they would hasten on his Coming that He may rescue TIME ITSELF out of their hands.

15. We may perhaps find, as was the case before Jerusalem's ruin, where the *Jewish apostasy* suffered its doom, that the *Gentile apostasy* shall be visited with pestilence, famine, earthquakes, wars, rumours of wars. And it may be a time of "false prophets." It may even be a time when such signs may be wrought by skill or by fraud, by mesmeric or scientific power, aided by Satan, as would, "if it were possible, deceive the very elect." And the anticipation of Dr. Arnold * may be fulfilled, when he wrote, "I fear the approach of a greater struggle between good and evil than the world has ever seen, in which there may happen the greatest trial to the faith of good men that can be imagined, if the greatest talent and ability are decidedly on the side of their adversaries, and they will have nothing *but faith and holiness to oppose to it*." Something of this kind may have been the meaning, or part of the meaning of the words, that "By signs and wonders they should deceive even the elect."

16. Once more ; are not men fulfilling 1 Thess.

* "Life," vol. i., p. 48.

v. 3, "*Saying, Peace and safety,*" thinking of a thousand years at least between them and the day of Christ? It is at such a time that the day overtakes us! It is while the unfaithful servant is saying, "My Lord delayeth his Coming." (Luke xii. 45, 46.)

When that day comes on, may we not fear for Scotland? How has the fine gold become dim! Thousands on thousands have forsaken the assembling of themselves together—and even amid forms of service, how very few seem to be living members of Christ. *Christ* is virtually dethroned by our rulers who refuse to act in behalf of the truth, and by Churches that admit the interference of civil authority in spiritual things. Once we were like *Judah*. We "*dwelt safely,*" because our banner was, "*The Lord our Righteousness:*" but this no longer distinguishes us. Once like *Judah's* land, we had our quiet Sabbaths, and our holy men of God that were as prophets among us; and our people gloried in following the Scriptures as their guide; and children honoured their parents and lived long in the land. But corruption has set in. A blight has come. Immorality, Infidelity, and every form of evil may be found making progress among us. Outward prosperity in Churches is mistaken for God's smile. Few

"sigh and cry" in secret for the wickedness of the land.

This is the day of the *Golden Sceptre*. But soon shall the "*Rod of iron*" be wielded by the same hand. Oh, that a land where martyrs have died for the crown-rights of Jesus, may be found ready to welcome the King at his Coming!

"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." (Isaiah xxvi. 20, 21.) And then comes the new earth, and the voice of the Beloved speaks in the ear of his Redeemed, "Lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear in the earth; and the time of the singing of birds is come; and the voice of the turtle is heard in OUR LAND!" He will call this earth "*Our land*," as being *his* and *ours* together. Creation will be at rest and quiet. It breaks forth into singing; it forgets its travail-pangs, because "the Son of Man" is come. Every tree is green; every spring is living water. Time is now one joyful jubilee. Earth cries to heaven, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts."

Every hill and plain bears the print of the Redeemer's hand, that has touched and purified it all.* And now saints in glory with Him are all pure like himself—feeling even as their Lord does—every separate heart beating in perfect sympathy with this great “central heart.” Oh, blessed day! Already do we seem at times to catch glimpses of that countenance which is altogether lovely. O thou, whom our soul loveth, hasten thy Coming; and meanwhile lengthen our patience! O Beloved, be as the roe and the young hart on the mountains of spices!

“The Lord direct our hearts unto the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ.”

* “Cannot God create another world many times more fair, and cast over it a mantle of light many times more lovely, and wash it with purer dew than ever dropped from the eyelids of the morning?” (Irving.)

CHAPTER XXI.

"HE THAT COMETH."

WHILE we consider it every way important to state and to defend the proofs of the *Premillennial* Advent, we consider it, at the same time, still more important that *the Advent itself* should be an object of desire. Whatever be the time when the Lord shall come again, the hope of that Coming must form a feature of our character, if we would cultivate full Scripture holiness. In Titus ii. 12, 13, this hope is represented as a very large ingredient in holiness. In 2 Peter iii. 11, 12, "*Holy conversation and godliness*" is joined to "*Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the Day of God.*" In 1 John iii. 3, it is declared, "Every man that has *this hope in Him*, purifies his heart, even as He is pure."

If a believer overlook public duties, though he attend to his duties as a parent and friend, he is defective in holiness,—he omits an ingredient. If another believer try to cultivate the living "soberly and godly," while he is less scrupulous

about the "justly," that man's holiness is very defective. So, if any believer who may attend to all the other features of holy character, omit this Blessed Hope, his holiness is defective. Nay, even though he do not altogether omit it, yet if it is not so cherished as to form a feature of his character, in a similar way with charity or patience, his holiness is not complete in all its parts.

Let us suppose the High Priest receiving the directions regarding the oil of holy ointment. (Exod. xxx. 22—24.) He ought to mingle together myrrh and cinnamon and sweet calamus and cassia. But having mingled the first three with the olive oil, he rests satisfied. It is true he has omitted the cassia, but the fragrance is sweet notwithstanding; so sweet, that even in the absence of the five hundred shekels of cassia, the ointment is most excellent. This is true; but then, on account of this omission, the smell is not of that peculiar sort which the Lord desired. An ingredient is a-wanting which would have tempered all the rest. Such is the case with the holiness of believers who leave out the Blessed Hope, while all other ingredients are carefully weighed and prepared.

If the High Priest, in the case of the "pure and holy perfume" for the mercy-seat (Exod. xxx. 34), had omitted the full weight of stacte, alleging that

the presence of the full weight of onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense, made up for the loss, would he not incur the charge of presumption? The Holy of holies is filled, no doubt, with a very precious fragrance; still, it is not quite that kind of fragrance which the Lord desired. It must be even so with the holiness of those who do not cherish the hope of the Lord's Appearing so fully, that it becomes an obvious feature of their character. How else is it to bear proportion to the other graces of the Spirit, but by becoming an evidently influential principle, just such as temperance or godliness?

We do not say that *the details* of the Second Advent must thus deeply affect us; what we say is, that *the event* must, or rather, that *He who is to come* must be so expected and longed for as to affect us powerfully.

It may be well, therefore, to close this volume with what may put the reader in that position, disentangled from all extraneous details. Much as we value the coming Kingdom and all that ushers it in, we value the *King himself* infinitely more. In drawing to a close, therefore, we shall briefly glance at what is written of Him who is to sit on the Throne and be the King of Glory. To see what He is makes us cry, "Come quickly."

1. *His Person.*

The eye of man never rested on an object so glorious as Daniel saw when he exclaimed, "Behold, one like the *Son of man* came in the clouds of heaven." It was the Word, in human nature ! the most marvellous and exquisitely beautiful of all the works of the Divine hand. Once, the expression of the gracious excellencies of his human soul appeared so attractive amid the lingering rays of the Transfiguration-hill, that the people felt themselves drawn toward Him. They ran and saluted Him. (Mark ix. 15.) What, then, shall be felt at his Coming ? What shall be the tone of his voice and the features of his countenance when He looks upon his redeemed from amid his own and his Father's glory ; glory so full, that the glory of his angels and saints shall be no more than the fringe of his robe ? But his *human nature* is not his Person. His Person is far more glorious still. Daniel, who saw Him as *Son of man*, tells also of Him as manifested in the furnace to be "*Son of God*." He is *God and man in two distinct natures, and one Person for ever*.

He is "THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FATHER'S GLORY and THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS PERSON." He is "the *Image of the invisible God*." He is "*God manifest in the flesh*." "*The Word made flesh*." He is "*The Mighty God*" of Isaiah ix. 6. "*The Great God*" of Titus ii. 13. The "*I AM*"

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of John viii. 58. He is "*The Lord* (Jah) *Jehovah*," in whom we have everlasting strength. He is "*Alpha and Omega*," "*First and Last*," "*The Beginning and the Ending*." "*The Holy One of God*." "*The Holy One of Israel*." To Him is sung that song, "*Lo, this is our God*." Of Him they cry as they see Him ascend his throne, "*God* is gone up with a shout ; *the Lord* with the sound of a trumpet." Of Him it is written, "*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ;*" and again, "*Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth*." He is "*The Son*." "*The Only-Begotten Son*" from the bosom of the Father. "*Son of God*." "*The Beloved Son*." He is "*The Lord*" (Adonai) who sits at the right hand. "*The Lord of Sabaoth*," into whose ear oppressed ones pour their sorrows. "*The Lord of hosts*," whom Isaiah saw on the throne, high and lifted up. He is "*The Beginning of the creation of God*," without whom was not anything made that was made. He is "*God over all, blessed for ever*."

And yet he is also, "*Son of Adam*," and "*Abraham's seed*," "*the Root from the stem of Jesse*," and "*the Root of David*," shooting up from them, as to his human origin. He is "*The woman's seed*;" "*The son of Mary*"—the son born of the Virgin. He is "*The man of sorrows*;" "*The man Christ Jesus*;" "*The Son of man*," who had

no where to lay his head. "*The man approved by God.*" "*The fruit of the earth.*" The same that was "*The child Jesus*" in the manger. The same that was "*The Nazarene.*" The same that was brought out of "the horrible pit, and the miry clay." The same who was "*A stranger on the earth.*" The same who "*was laid in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.*"

Thus we see Him truly "*Immanuel,*" *God with us.* He is "*The branch of the Lord,*" and "*The man whose name is The Branch;*" for He came forth from the Father's bosom as to his one nature; and, as to the other, He shot up from a human stem. His death proved Him to be "*The woman's seed;*" his resurrection proved Him to be the "*Son of God;*" his coming under the power of death showed that He was MAN; his coming forth from under it shewed that He was GOD. He is "*WONDERFUL.*" What may we not expect of such a Person—God-man? What may we not expect of his ways? What of his kingdom? What manifestations of God? What draughts from the deepest fountain of life!

2. His office as *Prophet.*

When we shall see Him on the throne of glory, we shall say one to another, Lo! this is He who has so long been to his Church a "PROPHET"—a

"*Teacher come from God*"—"The Prophet like Moses"—"The faithful and true witness," declaring what no man had seen or could know—the "Amen;" "the Truth;" "Wisdom and understanding" (Prov. viii. 1); the true "*Ecclesiastes*," or Preacher, of earth's broken cisterns; the true singer of "*The Song of Songs*," that set forth joy and peace and love from God to man. Lo! this is "*The Word*," who utters the heart and counsels of Godhead to man. Lo! this is "*The Counsellor*," who has solved every hard question between God and the sinner, and sent every Queen of Sheba home rejoicing. This is "*The Saviour*," who scattered the precious seed of the kingdom when He came forth weeping; but who is now returning with his sheaves. This is "*The Light*," "*The Light of the World*," "*The Light of Life*;" who has sent his Spirit to shew us the chambers of imagery in our own heart; who has flung back the curtain of darkness over hell, and shown us the worm that never dies; who has revealed the Father's well-pleased countenance, and the sinner's way to the Father. This is the "*Sender of the Father's promise, the Comforter*!" This is "*The Interpreter*, one of a thousand," who shows unto man God's uprightness. This is "*The Angel* that was with the Church in the wilderness;" "The

Angel that dwelt in the bush;" "The *Angel* that redeemed Jacob from all evil;" "The *Angel* of his presence"—the messenger that guided and gave counsel to the saints, coming forth, as He did, from the presence, from the bosom of God.

What may we not hear from Him in the ages to come! He will lead us to the living fountains of water himself, as He led the two disciples to Emmaus—perhaps all the time saying to one and another of his redeemed, "I loved *you* and gave myself for *you*!" How He will open our understandings to understand the Scriptures, and shew in the Scriptures the things concerning himself, while He "tells us plainly of the Father."

3. His office as PRIEST.

When we see Him on the throne, we shall remember Him as having saved us from the lowest hell. This is our "PRIEST;" our Aaron; "Our *High Priest* over the house of God," full of compassion. "*Minister of the Sanctuary and of the true tabernacle*," ever ready, and fully able to serve and atone, and reconcile us to God. This is the true "*Sacrifice*," whose blood was the out-poured life of one able to die for others. This is the "*Altar*" whereon the burnt-offering is laid. This is the "*Trespass-offering*," and "*The Sin-offering*;" He by himself purging away all variety of sin. This is our "*Peace-offering*," giving us

fellowship with God, while his blood removes the obstacles in the way. This is "*The Paschal Lamb.*" This is "The LAMB OF GOD that taketh away the sin of the world." This is the "*Lamb slain.*" This is *the Red Heifer*, whose ashes formed a perpetual purification. This is the *Heifer slain in the rough valley*; for He bore our unknown and untold guilt in this sad, dreary world under the curse. This is the *Scape-goat*. This is the *Two-fold bird*—He that liveth and was dead. This is Abel's *Lamb*. This is our "*Meat-offering,*" who presented his obedient life for us; and our "*Drink-offering,*" expressing a cordial complacency in his Father's law and will that we could never have done by all our acts of devotedness. This is our "*Laver,*" having received the Holy Spirit for us. He is our "*Candlestick of Gold,*" His Person being the golden shaft that bears up every branch. He is our "*Shewbread Table,*" His Person being that which presents us with the bread of heaven. He is our "*Altar of Incense,*" His Person being the altar, and his work, or merits, the incense. He is our "*Ark,*" wherein a fulfilled law is kept, and where the rod of the true priesthood is found, and where the "hidden manna" is preserved. He is our "*Mercy-seat,*" for his blood prevails to bring us into the presence of God, and to set us, like the cherubim, under the very glory of God. He is, in

a word, our "*Tabernacle*," our "*Sanctuary*," our "*Temple*."

He is our "*Surety*," taking on Him our liabilities. "*He who Himself bore our sins*." He said of Himself, "*I am among you as He that serves*," obeying our law, bearing our burdens, washing our feet in his Laver. He is "*Forerunner*," rending the veil, and running in before us to see that not a straw be in our path as we enter after Him. He is "*Deliverer*," "*Propitiation*." He is "*Our Peace*," having made both one by his cross. He is "*made unto us Redemption*." He is "*the Way*," by whom we come to God, and by whom God comes to us ; "*Advocate*," "*Intercessor*," "*Mediator*," "the one *Mediator*" between the invisible God and the visible creature ; between the guilty creature and the Holy God. "*The Ransom for many*," paying the half-shekel of their atonement. He is "*Redeemer*" of our persons and of our lost estate, like Boaz, and is He of whom Job could say, "I know that *my Redeemer* liveth, and that He shall stand upon the earth at the Latter Day." He is "*the Righteous One*," "Christ, *the Righteous*" in His person and in His office, "*the Lord our Righteousness*," "*the Righteous Branch*," under whose shade millions have found justification, a covering which fig-leaves could not afford. He is "*JESUS*," that saves His people

from their sins, and "CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION."

4. His office as KING.

When we see Him on His throne, then shall we remember how it was written of Him, "Go forth and behold king Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him." We see him in his kingdom as he of whom it was written, "I have set *my King* upon mine holy hill of Zion." He is "the *King of the Jews*;" "the *King of Israel*;" "the *King higher than Agag*;" "the *Sceptre* that arose out of Israel." "the *King of saints*;" over whom he sways his golden sceptre. "the *King of nations*;" over whom he ruled with the rod of iron. "The *Prince*." "The *Prince of the kings of the earth*." "The *firstborn of every creature*." "He who holdeth the *two-edged sword*." "The *Chief Ruler*" from Judah. "The *Governor*" to rule Israel. *Melchizedec. Joseph. Joshua. David. Solomon. Eliakim*, who had "the key of David." *Zerubbabel*. The "Judge," who led captive a greater captivity than the son of Abinoam, and broke asunder stronger gates than Samson. He of whom one sang, "The Lord is *our Judge*, the Lord is *our Lawgiver*, the Lord is *our King*." "The *Lion of the tribe of Judah*," who took the prey from the mighty and then couched at rest. "The *Prince of Peace*,"

whose kingdom is calmness and holy joy, through the Holy Ghost. "*Shiloh*."

He is "the Captain of the Lord's host," "the *bruiser of Satan* under our feet." "The Destroyer of death and him that has the power of death." "The *Judge of quick and dead*." "The *Heir*." "The *Heir of all things*." "*King of glory*." "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

5. When we see Him on His throne, and with eyes no more dim, can take in a view of his *combined excellencies*, then we shall perceive the fulness of such names as those that follow. This *Person*, who is Godman, is *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *Prince*; and from this combination of excellencies we learn to know the preciousness of his name, "*Messiah*," or "*Christ*." Him has God the Father sealed and anointed, and sent. This is "that *worthy name* by which ye are called." He is "*Apostle* of our profession," sent forth to tell us of God's grace, and "*The sender of the Holy Spirit*" to us, that we may in our hearts witness of the Father. He is the true *Baptist*, for "*He baptizeth with the Holy Ghost and with fire*." He is "*The altogether Lovely*." "*Fairer than the children of men*;" "*Chief among ten thousand*;" "*the Pearl of Great Price*," by which the merchant-man pays off his debts, and has overflowing plenty where-with to purchase all things; He is "*the Eagle*" that bore Israel on his wings; "the *Brazen Serpent*,"

by looking to whom the kingdom of the Redeemed have been made whole; "*Physician*," by whom every wound is bound up, and weakness turned into strength by the application of the *Balm of Gilead*. "*Shepherd*," "*Chief Shepherd*," "*Good Shepherd*," "*Bishop*," or "*Overseer of Souls*," "*Great Shepherd* of the sheep;" no wanderers now, and no wolf near; no withered pasture now, and no well with the stone on its mouth. He is the "*Star*" that came out of Jacob, and shed its lustre over a dark world. "*Morning Star*," sure pledge of full day; "the *Bright and Morning Star*," and then "*Sun*," "*Sun of Righteousness* with healing in his wings;" "*Sun of a morning without clouds*," as that happy kingdom testifies, where the people have their iniquity forgiven, and their tears wiped away.

He is "*Second Adam*," and is "*a quickening Spirit*." The first Adam had life for himself alone; this Adam is a *life-giver*. He is "*Head over all things*;" streams of life go forth from him to all these millions of the saved, and he has stretched out the arms of his upholding strength to both *men once fallen*, and to *angels that never fell*.

He is "*Bridegroom*;" there must be great joy in his presence. He is "*Friend and Brother*;" no reserve or distance felt between Him and His own. He is "*The Comforter*" who can in sympathy be "weak

as the weakest, strong as the strongest. "*Husband*" shews that His kingdom will be like a holy domestic circle. "*Father of the Prodigal*," and "*Everlasting Father*," are names that tell of his having formed men into a happy family, and his kingdom *a home*.

He is "*Life*" to the soul, "*Resurrection*" to the body—having swallowed up sin and death together. "*Tree of Life*," "*Bread of Life*," "*River of Life*," "*Fountain of the Water of Life*," "*Our Life*," "*Prince of Life*," "*Light of Life*," giving life, and giving to life all that it is. He has "*the seven spirits and the seven stars in his right hand*." He is "*Mighty to save*," He is "*Saviour*," "*the Saviour of the World*."

This is He of whom prophets and holy men have spoken as "*the Plant of Renown*," "*the Rose of Sharon*, and *Lily of the Vallies*;" "*the goodly Cedar-tree*," in whose boughs fowl of every wing find shade; "*the Apple-tree*." This is He who called Himself "*the True Vine*," whose branches run over the wall, each one laden with fruit; He is the "*Bundle of Myrrh*," and "*Cluster of Camphor*," refreshing in ordinary hours to those who bear about with them his dying. "*This is my Beloved*," this is "*the Lord whom ye seek*."

This is He who was known as "*the Rock*," "*the Rock higher than I*," so that he could cast a shadow over me; "*the Great Rock in a weary land*," and

"Rivers of Water in a dry place," when earth was all a wilderness. This is *"the Man that is the Hiding-place," "Refuge," "Shelter," "Fortress," "Shield," "High Tower," "Cave of Adullam," "Rock of Ages," "City of Refuge."* He was *"the Smitten Rock"* whence came the cool floods of which thirsty sinners drank; *"the Manna"* of which the hungry ate; *"the Horn* of their salvation," pushing enemies aside; *"Tabernacle from the heat, and covert from wind and rain,"* when the sinner felt wrath pursuing him, and saw the cloud gathering over him.

He is *"Chief Musician,"* to teach us to sing the *New Song* in New Jerusalem, and to follow him in his thanksgivings. He is *"Desire of all Nations,"* by whom Creation's groans shall be ended. He is *"the Noah"* that shall bring us to the New World. He is the same who is by the saints called *"my God," "our God," "your God," "AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH."*

It was He who *"loved Martha, and Mary, and Lazarus,"* and is *"the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."* He is *"the Consolation of Israel,"* who shall wipe away all tears, and remove the rebuke of His people; *"the Stranger's Shield," "the Widow's Stay," "the Orphan's Help,"*—commending the grateful Samaritan, giving back the widow's son from the tomb, and saying to his little children, "I

will not leave you *orphans*." He is God's "*Elect in whom his soul delighteth,*" and "*In whom he is well pleased.*"

This is a "NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME." What a boundless ocean-fulness of blessedness is here ! "Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad ; let the sea roar and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful and all that is therein ; let the floods clap hands ; let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, FOR HE COMETH, FOR HE COMETH TO JUDGE THE EARTH !"

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